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WIND-WHISPERS;

A

COLLECTION OF POEMS,

By Mrs. L. Virginia French.

"Oh! many a voice is thine, thou Wind! full many a voice is thine:
From every scene thy wing o'ersweeps thou bear'st a sound and sign:
A minstrel wild and strong thou art, with a mastery all thine own;
And the spirit is thy harp, O Wind! that gives the answering tone!"

HEMANS.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:
PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1856.

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TO THE

"OLD FOLKS AT HOME,"

This Volume is Inscribed,

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE CHILD,

"GINNIE."

PREFACE.

"If writers write much that is good, and write it well, they are read much and long; if the reverse, people simply pass them by, and go in search of what is more interesting. There needs be no great fuss about publishing or not publishing. Those who forbear may rather be considered the vain ones, who wish to be distinguished from the crowd."—Margaret Fuller Ossoli.

Float on, thou wandering wind,
And sing of good, as when
The notes of the noble Lind
Swept the deep souls of men.
To spirits pure and bright
Thy lay of joy impart,
And let thy wing of light
Droop o'er the dreaming heart.

And, lowly-whispering wind,
Speak, ere the life-star wane,
Soft to the soul that sinned,
"Hope in the Lord," again.
Sweet, ere the shadows fall,
Sing of the "Home" above,
And let thy voice to *all*
Be laden deep with Love!

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
DEDICATION	iii
PREFACE	v
L'ENVOI	vii
Mother, Home, and Heaven	13
My Lide	18
The "Wasted Heart"	20
The Loved and Lost	25
Song	29
The Flower-Mission	31
The "Still, Small Voice"	32
My Mother's Hand	40
The Lost "Louisiana"	43
The Years	54
Love the Old	63
Hy Brysail	65
The Bird of Paradise	68

"The Bonnie Bairns" 71
The Orphan's Home 75
Leonore 77
The Mausoleum 80
The Sullied Name 84
Song of the Sylphide 87
The Spirit-Lovers 89
The Spirit-Bridal 93
The Child of Song 97
Anniversary Ode 99
The Frost-King's Festival 101
Song 108
To "Pattie" 110
Greenwood Graves 113
The Lyre of Time 116
The Love-Signal 121
The Pariah 125
The Homestead 130
Leave us not 135
"Thou couldst not Stay" 138
Only Love Me 141
The Motherless 143
Notes from a Spirit-Lyre 148
Unwritten Music 152
Alone 155
What seekest Thou? 158

Weep not 161
The Apollo Belvidere 163
Chains of Clay 169
The Man of the Age 173
"Amelia" 177
The "Long Ago" 180
The Eloquence of Ruins 184
The Iron Horse 188
Take me Home 190
One or Two? 193
The Blasted Tree 196
The "Great River" 198
Miserere of the Pines 202
Insanity 204
Te Deum Laudamus 208
Lucifer 210
The Mount of Mind 216
Little Children 219
Voices 221
I Love Thee 224
Dolce Far Niente 227
Oh! would I were at Home! 230
The Ghouls 233
"Chateaux en Espagne" 237
The Beautiful South 239
Why do I Love you? 242

Light and Shadow..... 244
The Orphan's Mother..... 246
The Angels of Fever and of Frost..... 249
The Katydid..... 254
The Little Brothers..... 256
The Dream of Pythagoras..... 258

WIND-WHISPERS.

Mother, Home, and Heaven.

Mother mine!
The earth is cold above thee: long ago
They laid thee down within the silent tomb,
With breaking hearts, and smoothed the turf above
Thy dreamless slumber. Glorious summer-time
Was there, to blend her ringing harmonies
Of bird, and breeze, and chiming waterfall,
As though a seraph's wing had swept the harp
Of universal Nature, till its chords
Thrilled the soft air with mystic melody;
An ever-sounding anthem to the God
Whose breathing kissed Creation into life.
Unheeded, on the "dull, cold ear of death,"
That music trembled, and the solemn sound
Of "dust to dust" jarred, like a discord strange,
Along that rich, bewildering harmony,
And told its origin was but of earth.

Long weary years have mingled with the Past,
Since from thy grave they slowly turned away,
As from their hearts the spirit of despair
Gushed in low, broken tones, and shuddering sought
A darkened home, to dwell no more with thee,
Save in the realms of Hope and Memory.

The earth is cold above thee, and to-day
The wintry wind wails through the leafless trees,
And sighs around thy monumental urn
Its requiem. But far within my heart
Thou hast a brighter being: as thou *wast*,
Joyous, and young, and proudly beautiful,
Remembrance cannot trace; but as thou *art*,
More lovely than before a withering blight
Shaded thy cheek's young bloom, or pale disease
Blended its fading roses—ere the weight
Of fearful suffering crushed thy tender form:
Thou art before me in the dazzling light
Of angel beauty, robed in loveliness;
A soft star gleaming through the mists of life—
A radiant seraph by the throne of God!

Home far away!
Like dew on lily leaves, the gentle voice
Of olden time falls on my dreaming heart.
Remembrance, faithful to her guarded trust,
Is bending o'er me, and her pencil fair,

Like magic, traces o'er the faded lines
Of old familiar scenes. It stirs my soul,
As waving flame is shaken by the wind
At midnight hour. I hear the solemn dirge
Of Ocean, rolling on to meet the shore,
And winds that murmur to the sighing pines.
Blue are the skies above me: softly through
The dim recesses of a linden grove,
The streamlet wanders, and the blue-bird's song
Sweeps by me on the breath of summer hours.
Anon, a train of star-lit imagery
Comes wending up along the shadowy Past,
Blent with the music of departed years:
A pilgrim train; and o'er a "bridge of sighs"
They pass, to bow before a ruined shrine
And broken altar-stone, where burned the light
Of pleasant hopes that perished long ago,
And bring again the wreaths of faded joys
That hang in Memory's temple. Often thus
My spirit revels, and my heart forgets,
Amid the maze of labyrinthine dreams,
That it is but a wanderer. Strangers now
Circle around the glowing hearth, where once
A joyous trio gathered: stranger hands
Will train the infant buds that cluster o'er
Our vine-clad casement. They may thrill to bloom,
And birds and bees may lull them to repose

At evening hour, with dewy murmurings;
But the young heart that trembled to their lay,
And loved them in their purity, will be
Far, far away: and when in stranger lands
It wanders forth, without one loving eye
To light its wayward path, its dream shall be
Of thee, sweet Home, as soft a whisper falls,
Lonely, and deep, and fraught with melody—
"Blest are *the loved*, for theirs is a prelude
To Paradise!"

HEAVEN above!
Strong feeling, with its deep, resistless tide
Of wildering visions, hopes of rainbow light,
And wreaths of aspiration, like a cloud
Of incense sweet, eternally ascending,
Floats ever up to thee! Within this world
Of all things mutable, and fleeting fair,
How pants the soul for one life-giving sound,
"For ever faithful"—tones that live and love,
And never change. Vain hope, and vainer trust!
Time's fearful characters are stamped upon
All earthly things; and immortality—
That amaranthine signature of God—
Rests not, for us, on aught beneath the skies.
Naught unto us is changeless, save the faith
And hope of HEAVEN, amid the broken gems

And crushed rose-petals of departed joys,
Immaculate. Beneath the tainted breath
Of worldly passion, winds that o'er it sweep,
Laden with memories of a reckless past,
Driving the future's cloudy mystery,
It rests—an angel with a folded wing!
There is a soft, dim twilight of the soul,
And glowing memories linger far along
Its hushed horizon, with a beauty like
The clouds of evening, floating as they sleep.
Mother! 'tis *then* that holy thoughts of thee,
And Home, and HEAVEN, where thou art reigning now,
Come stealing earthward through the shadowy gloom.
I hear the waving of thine angel wings
Across that twilight sky; and seem to list
The cadence of thy low, sweet music-tone,
That perished long ago. My heart is lone
And weary now; and oh! that it should strive
Thus on weak words to pour a stream of fire,
Wringing the flame from lava-veins that burst
From passion's fountain, when it should await
That hour, thrice blesséd, when its love shall find
MOTHER and HOME *in* HEAVEN!

My Lide.

The spring-time is waking to beauty and bloom;
The storm-clouds are breaking, and bright through the gloom
The blue heaven flashes, like gleams of thine eye,
Through the dark, silken lashes that deepen its dye:
'Tis a glance full of tenderness, blended with pride,
Like thine own azure eye-beam, my sweet sister Lide!

The rosebuds are sleeping, but odors around
Tell of hyacinths peeping from yon grassy mound;
And the peach-bloom is blushing like cloudlets at even,
When the sunset is flushing the calm summer heaven;
And I dream, as its leaflets float down at my side,
Of the rose-tinted cheek of my sweet sister Lide!

The south wind is blowing, and up from the wood,
Where the streamlet is flowing in deep solitude,
Swells in low, liquid numbers the waterfall's song,
As its singing wave slumbers, or dashes along;
And the clear, silvery tone of that murmuring tide
Seems the love-laden voice of my sweet sister Lide!

The soft stars are twinkling in beauty above,
And dewdrops besprinkling their blossoms of love;
While a fresh, balmy breathing of spring-tide's perfume
O'er my free soul is wreathing that delicate bloom,
Which glows o'er the beautiful feelings that glide
Through the pure angel-heart of my sweet sister Lide!

There 's a charm in the far gleam of waves on the sea,
And a spell in the star-beam that whispers of thee;
But as gay hours, in fleeting, new blushes of Spring
To this warm bosom's beating in loveliness bring,
So its soft feelings deepen to glorious pride,
When its dreams of its angel — my sweet sister Lide!

The world thinks us lonely — 't is true we 're alone,
Not as twin-spirits only — *our hearts are but one:*
With no parent, no brother, no glad, happy home,
We 're the world to each other wherever we roam;
And my young life glides onward like Spring's sunny tide,
When I dwell with "mine own one" — my "love of a Lide!"

The "Wasted Heart."

"The trees of the forest shall blossom again,
The song-bird shall warble its soul-thrilling strain;
But the heart Fate hath wasted no spring can restore,
And its song shall be joyful no more—never more."

A blush stole deepening through the folded leaves
Of that young, guileless heart; and far within
Upon the altar of her soul, a flame
Like to an inspiration came: she felt
That she had learned to love, as e'en the heart
Of woman seldom loves.

Alone in life,
She was an orphan child, and sorrow's storm
With bitter blast had swept her gentle soul;
But that was past, and now exultingly
It revelled in a blissful consciousness,—
It loved—it was beloved.

When twilight dim
Stole on in balmy silence, she would list
A coming step;—its music-fall kept time
To all the hurried throbbings of her heart;

And when it stayed, a soul-lit gaze would seek
Her drooping eye, where deepest faith had poured
Its dreamy worship forth so fearlessly;
Eyes that *to him* were never silent,—orbs
Whose glances sought for his at times, and threw
Their light far through his spirit, till it thrilled
To music every tensioned nerve that strung
The living lyre of being. Lowly then
At such an hour his haughty passion slept,
Before the portals of their azure heaven,
Like to a fallen angel who has sunk
To rest beside the glory-shadowed gate
Of a lost Paradise; and when he bowed
To press his lip upon the brow that lay
Soft pillowed on his bosom, she would start
Up from his half-embrace, and then, to hide
Her sweet confusion, turn aside to part
With white and jewelled fingers, tremblingly,
The rich, dark masses of his waving hair.
Then joyous hopes came crowding brightly through
Their dreaming souls, as did the evening stars
Through the calm heaven above them; and the world
Of happiness that lay upon their hearts
Was silent all; for language had no words
To shadow forth the fond imaginings
That made its very atmosphere a heaven
Of dreamy, rich, reposing purity.

An angel bowed before the Mercy-seat,
Trusts not more purely in the changeless One
To whom his prayer ascendeth, than did she
The proud, bright being whom her vestal love
Had made its idol-god;—she could have laid
Her soft, white hand in his without a thought,
Except of love and trust, and bade him lead
Her to the end of life's bewildered maze,
Blindfolded, while her heart on his would rest,
Without one care for Time, one lonely fear
For that Eternity which mortals dread.
And thus it is that woman's sacrifice
On life's great altar is—her *woman's heart!*

A change—a fearful and a blighting change
Came o'er them: how, or why, it matters not:
Enough to know it came: enough to feel
That they shall meet as they have met, no more.
Lost, lost for ever; and her life stood still
Gazing upon the future's cold, gray heaven,
As if to catch one gleam of hope's fair star.
No hope was there for her: the hand of God
Lay darkly in the cloud that shadowed it.
It seemed a never-ending death was hers,
As one by one she saw her hopes expire,
Yet shed no tear, because the fount was dry.
There came no shriek of anguish as the tide

Of cold and leaden loneliness swept in
Upon her gentle bosom, though the crush
Of earth upon the coffin of a loved,
Still living heart, was not more terrible.
She prayed for power to "suffer and be still,"
And God was merciful: it came at last,
As dreamless slumber to a heart that mourns.
She smoothed her brow above a burning brain:
Her eye grew bright, but strangers never knew
That all its brilliancy and light were drawn
From out the funeral-pyre of every hope
That in an earlier, happier hour had glowed
On passion's hidden altar. Months rolled on,
And when the softened color came again
To cheek and lip, it was all palely bright,
As though from out a sleeping rose's heart
Its faint, sweet life had faded tranquilly.
She mingled with the world. Its gay saloons
Gave back the echo of her ringing laugh;
Her ruby lip, wreathed with its winning smile,
Gently replied to gentle flatteries;
And when her soul flowed forth upon the waves
Of feeling, in the charméd voice of song,
You would have dreamed that gushing melody
The music of a happy, warbling heart,
So bird-like was its joyous carolling.
And many envied that fair, lonely child,

Her light and happy spirit:—oh! it was
A bitter, burning mockery! Her life
Was one continued struggle with itself
To *seem* what it could never *be;* to hide
Its gnawing canker 'neath a blooming smile;
To crush the soul that panted to be free;
And force her shrinking heart to clasp again
The love that fed upon itself, and wore
Her inner life away!
They could not know
That one may live, and smile, and still *be cursed;*
Cursed with a "living judgment,"—once to be
Beloved, and then to be beloved no more,
And *never to forget!* Her life was like
Some pictured lily, where the artist's hand
Gives it proportion, shades its virgin leaves
With nature's beauty; but the bee can find
No banquet there—the breezes no perfume.
The shadows of the tomb have lengthened o'er
Her sky, that blushes with the morn of life;
Far on the inner shrine of Memory
Lie the cold ashes of her "wasted heart;"
By burning sighs that sear the darkened soul,
By lava-drops wrung from a fevered brain,
Or e'en the breath of God, to be rekindled
Never,—no, "never more!"

The Loved and Lost.

"Whom the gods love, die young."

THE glories of the summer-time were fading fast away;
Its freshness and its rosy hours were waning in decay;
And tho' a fragrance lingered still when all the bloom was shed,
Like melody from faded lips whose sunny smiles have fled,
It seemed a shade from other worlds along the earth had moved,
And with its beauty passed away the blossom that we loved.

The gems of youth and loveliness were shining on her brow,
(Alas! that we should live to weep their beauty shaded now!)
Her red lips parted with a smile which shone to cheer and bless;
Her dark eye floated in a light of dewy tenderness,
Or threw its radiant flashes from the inner shrine of thought,
Like jewel-tinted sparkles from a broken rainbow caught.

The voices of the beautiful, its music and its flowers,
Had brought their richest gifts to crown her childhood's sunny hours;

A spirit whose bewildering thoughts in starry beauty gleam,
A mind to throw the living light of glory round a dream,
A heart 'mid worldly cares to seek the holy and the high,
And soar above the clouds of earth, a song-bird of the sky!

Pale terror of the scythe and spade! the dim and sunken eye,
Gliding, an ever-silent shade, in solemn stillness by,
Thy hand has crushed a harp of life that sounded hopes
sublime,
As fell upon its "silver chords" the numbered sands of Time:
'T was tuned by angel fingers for a harmony too brief,
And harp and music passed away with summer's tinted leaf.

Oh! weep not, Mother! thou whose love was like a mantle cast
Around her form, to shield it well from sorrow's bitter blast:
Cold, cold to thee may seem the wave of dark affliction's
stream;
And yet above the billows' rage a beacon-light will beam;
A rainbow formed of hope and love above the storm will shine,
To guide thee to a heaven where her soul shall welcome thine.

And weep not, brother! thou whose heart so panted but to bless
The fair and fading blossom with fond and last caress;
Weep not that ere you saw her, and her dying kiss was given,
The starry wings unfolded, and the spirit soared to Heaven:
She sought an angel sister through the far-off azure skies,
And now they wander side by side in blessèd Paradise.

Yet though the lovely sleeper lies in silence down to rest,
And the "valley's clod" is pressing on her cold and marble breast;
Though glad and gleesome revellings of youthful life are o'er,
And bounding pulses tremble to the voice of love no more;
Think not of *her* as slumbering in the dark and chilling tomb,
All shrouded in its damps of death, and mantled in its gloom.

For oh! we know that though unseen, her softly beaming eyes
Are gazing on us from the depths of evening's quiet skies:
We know it is her silvery voice that murmurs gently by,
And lends enchanting sweetness to the summer zephyr's sigh;
And we feel a music-thrilling, as if starry angel wings
Were waving o'er the silent harp of Memory's thousand strings.

The loved, the lost, the beautiful,—they visit us at eve,
Amid the dreamy visions which the twilight shadows weave;
When the lull of falling waters comes so sweetly to the ear,
And fairy forms are floating through the glowing atmosphere;
When sunset banners waving leave their gold-emblazoned beams
Empurpled 'mid the foliage, and mirrored on the streams.

Oh! sweetly mournful is the joy it gives us thus to dwell,
At holy eventide, upon the gloomy shade that fell
Around our hearts so chillingly, when He who gave the gem
Which shed the richest lustre on affection's diadem,
Bereft the glowing circlet of its fondly cherished prize,
And bore away the jewel bright, to bless its native skies!

Song.

Where the sweet waters met,
Gracefully sweeping,
Lay the white violet,
Peacefully sleeping.
And a star-shadow fell,
Silvery gleaming,
Soft on the snowy bell,
Blissfully dreaming.

Up from the ocean's lone
Storm-haunted dwelling,
Came a deep thunder-tone,
Mournfully swelling.
Through the air-solitude
Cloud-banners waving,
Marshalled the tempest rude,
Angrily raving.

Morn o'er the billows shone,
  Playfully roving:
Where has the floweret flown,
  Lovely and loving?
Far down the chilly tide,
  Broken and faded,
Wanders the "fairy's pride,"
  Lorn and degraded.

Thus on the stream of years,
  Youth is a blossom;
Hope, like the star, appears
  Bright on its bosom.
Age is the coming cloud,
  Faltering never;
Sorrow, the tempest-crowd,
  Blighting it ever!

The Flower-Mission.

Go, beautiful blossom! whose breathing
  Can bliss to my spirit impart;
And thy delicate fragrance upwreathing
  Shall tell him thou'rt like to my heart.

All brightly thy petals are folding
  O'er the deep crimson blushes within;
But to hide from too eager beholding,
  The germ of a passion unseen.

And the leaflets thy beauty enclosing,
  In a soft, mossy veiling enshrined,
Seem to tell of a spirit reposing
  'Neath a shadow its love has entwined.

Then go, lovely minion of feeling!
  And softly thy breath shall reveal
Far *more* than my lip is revealing—
  Far *less* than my spirit can feel.

The "Still, Small Voice."

The stars were weary: all the summer night
They held high revelry through heaven's blue halls,
And danced along their wanton wanderings
To the weird chiming of the "Sister Seven:"
Now, slowly paling like young beauty's cheek,
Returning from the midnight festival,
Their glances faded, lest they should behold
The gentle dalliance of the earth and sky.

The silver lute of the young morning star
Thrilled faintly into silence, as the dawn
With red lip kissed the mountain's snowy brow,
Which, bathed in softest slumber, blushed to own
The gentle pressure. As the waves of light
Broke o'er the margin of a darkened world,
In golden ripples, faintly they revealed
Bright uplands, where the spirit of the mist
Hung low upon the bosom of the hills,
And wept soft, dewy tears; while o'er their crests

Swept her long tresses of the wreathing cloud,
With white peaks flashing through their tangled curls,
Like jewels crushed in the dishevelled hair
Of maniac beauty; and more faintly still
Gleamed through the shadows at the mountain's base,
Where smiling valleys dimpled Nature's cheek,
And laughing meadows cradled singing streams.

On Horeb's mount a holy man of God
Stood forth to view the fragrant strife of morn,
Sunshine with shadow, rosy day with night,
And sleeping Death with glory-wakened Life.
A close, dark mantle wrapped his aged form;
His brow uncovered, though a snowy lock,
Stirred by the breeze of morning, waved above
Its frozen marble; while the gathered shades
Of many years hung, like a coronal
Of withered leaves, around it; and his eyes,
Strange, deep, and fathomless, gleamed forth beneath
Its deadly whiteness, like two liquid flames
From the recesses of a marble tomb.
Mystic and subtle as some charmed perfume,
A sense of pleasure thrilled upon his heart,
As quick, faint pulses of the scented breeze
Brought balmy odors from the dewy flowers,
Waved the plumed monarchs of the forest proud,
And wafted on the islets of the cloud

Through liquid sapphire, where they seemed to float
Softly and dreamily, and full of love.
He bowed and worshipped; and "the Lord passed by."

The sky was changed; and hoarsely, from afar,
A sound of waters, and of mingled winds,
Through forests raging, crept upon the ear;
And, driving o'er the azure fields of heaven,
Cloud after cloud came rolling swiftly on:
Black Pelion upon gloomy Ossa piled.
Like giant towers they gather; and from point
To point, along their frowning battlements,
Red signal-fires are flashing far and free.
Hark! the deep watchword of the rushing storm!
The thunder-spirit calls his squadrons dark,
Far through the trackless void of scowling space;
And lightning rends the cloudy canopy,
As prophet's vision tears aside the veil
That shadows o'er the future; and beholds
Beyond unfolded naught but dim, and wild,
And fearful mystery. Then the sullen roar
Of elemental conflict crashing fell:
A mingled din of crushing thunderbolts,
And sadly moaning winds, and heavy drops
Of rain, as though the demons of the storm
Wept o'er the ruin which their fury wrought.
'T was past; and o'er the eastern mountains rolled

The cloudy banners, and the chariot-wheels
Of burning levin: by the tempest led,
(As some great conqueror from battle won,)
The serried hosts of falling waters passed
Beneath the rainbow's bright triumphal arch;
And Nature shouted as the wing of peace
Fell softly o'er the wild and wasted track
Of elemental war. "The Lord was not"
Amid the rushing armies of the storm:
Its fierceness was the shadow of his frown,
Deep-veiled, yet dark, and terribly sublime;
And as upon its far-retiring verge
The glorious rainbow brightened, 't was a dim
And faint reflection of His mercy's smile!

Again the spirit of a fearful change
Came stealing o'er the blue and tranquil heaven:
A hollow, rushing murmur filled the air;
And the low sobbing of the rising wind
Grew deeper, till in howling gusts it whirled
Dark wreaths of earthy fragments to the sky,
As though the maddened gnomes were hurling death
Against the vapory armaments of air;
And lurid flames, with blue and ghastly glare,
Gleamed o'er the face of Nature till it blanched,
As though the warning of the last dread trump
Had smote her guilt upon a coward heart.

The earthquake, rising from his burning lair,
Deep in the bosom of a rock-ribbed world,
Shook everlasting hills from out his path,
Like a roused lion flinging from his mane
The dewy drops of morning. At his tread
The pale earth trembled; and anon there came
A crushing down of rocky battlements,
Which, for a moment, high and quivering hung
On cloud-crowned pinnacles, then thundering fell
Far down the dark, immeasurable void
Which yawned beneath them, like the livid lips
Of fierce, insatiate hell. He tore away
The iron nerves from that strong mountain's heart,
As though the destiny of a conqueror lay
Deep hid within it, and the hour was come
When he must march to seek it, in a last
And wild death-revel. As this passed away,
In racking throes, which might have seemed the strong,
Convulsive shudder of dissolving worlds,
The earth moaned feebly, as a dying child
Will murmur faintly in its fever-dream:
Then darkness gathered round it, like the deep,
Black jaws of cold annihilation.

It came—it vanished—and "the Lord was not"
Throned high upon the earthquake's blasting rage
But, at the echo of his chariot-wheels,
The iron land tossed like the ocean waves,

And mountains dashed aloft their crested heads
As surging billows flout a stormy sky.

The air was stagnant, cold, and dark, and dull:
Heavy as morn to aching senses, when
Some dreamer wakes to feel a load of care
Pressed back upon his memory; and hastes
To close his eyes, that he may cast it off,
And dream once more of happiness and hope.
Like molten lead, along the sullen sky,
Gray clouds hung drooping; for the summer wind
Seemed frozen, and its restless wing was dead.
Strong, swift, and chainless as some maddening thought,
There came the spirit of a change, which seemed
To wave aloft the banner and the sword
Of a destroying angel: withering winds
Rose, winged with lightning, and the brazen sky
Was one red desert, peopled with a host
Of burning shadows, lurid shapes of hell,
That wildly mingled with the falling stars,
And whirled in flaming chaos up to heaven!
Clouds, heated to a whiteness, writhed and tossed
Along the horizon's verge of liquid fire:
Bright glowed the valleys; and the eternal hills
Seemed towering to the brassy vault of heaven,
In gorgeous pyramids of living flame:
A mighty holocaust, and offered high,

On the red altars of a crumbling world,
To some fierce god of elemental fire.
It flamed—it faded—but "the Lord was not"
Upon the burning pinions of its strength:
His glance, which withers dynasties and thrones;
His passing breath, where hangs the fate of kings
And mighty nations, kindled up the sky,
And lightened o'er a terror-stricken world!

Noontide poured down upon the sleeping earth
And dreaming waves a long and fervid kiss
Of panting passion; and the Orient's heart
Glowed in its languid atmosphere of love.
The storm, the earthquake, and the flashing fire,
Had left it placid as the orbéd brow
Of slumbering Beauty: through the fragrant air
There came no sounding sweep of angel wings;
No frowning fury rushing on to tread
The wrathful wine-press of avenging God;
But the rich music of a "still, small voice,"
From the far arches of the vaulted sky
Stole slowly earthward; and as though the breath
Of God were sweeping o'er the Æolian line
Of universal being, till it thrilled
A new creation into loving life:
Hushed was the chiming of each starry sphere;
The universe of harmony was dumb;

For in the music of that "still, small voice,"
Was blent the omnipresence of the Lord.
The prophet shrouded up his lofty brow
Deep in his mantle; and his soul grew still
With silent worship, as his thirsting heart
Drank the rich murmur of that mystic tone
Which told the mighty presence of his God!

My Mother's Hand.

At morning once it loved to press
The ringlets from my baby brow;
At eve, with many a fond caress,
It folded mine with prayer and vow;
But now my matin hymn is sung
Upon a far and foreign strand;
And when the vesper chime is rung,
Where is my mother's gentle hand?

'Tis spring-tide; and the tinted clouds
Are pouring down their jewel-showers,
To wake the fairy bloom that shrouds
The woodland's dew-enamelled flowers.
But oh! this outward world is changed!
Amid it all alone I stand,
And weep that cold and death-estranged
Now lies my mother's tender hand.

'T is summer-time: the streamlet bright
Comes dancing down the southern hill;
And on its margin, pure and white,
The star-like lilies linger still.
Deep in the verdant valley's bloom,
With cooling breezes, soft and bland,
I wander; yet 't is all a gloom—
I miss my mother's clasping hand.

'T is autumn mild: the forest wears
The gorgeous rainbow's varied hue;
And far aloft the zephyr bears
Its whispers to the welkin blue.
None lead me through the wooded wild,
Or point me to the beauteous band
Of Nature's loves, that woke and smiled
Beneath my mother's guiding hand.

'T is winter: fast the wandering wind
Is flying, hoarsely howling by,
As though the homeless sought to find
A refuge in the scowling sky.
The sweeping snow-drift lies far down
Upon the mountain gray and grand:
Less fair that spotless, icy crown,
Than was my mother's snowy hand.

Sweet mother! from the blest "unknown"
Where thou art reigning brightly now,
Give back the love which thou alone
Couldst image on my heart and brow.
Come, with affection strong and deep,
From that far-distant, shadowy land;
Above me still love's vigil keep,
And guide me with thine angel hand.

The Lost "Louisiana."

An autumn eve was closing, in its loveliness serene,
O'er the rich, voluptuous beauty of a sunny Southern scene;
Where the soft, empurpled heaven smiles so sweetly from above,
And the murmur of the waters is the very voice of love;
When, like a gush of joyousness along a darkened dream,
Far through the shady orange grove the tiny wavelets gleam;
And their music-tone is blending, as it thrills upon the ear,
With the carol of the mocking-bird, so exquisite and clear.

Along the waving woodland, through the meadows far away,
The wanton winds were trilling forth a merry roundelay;
And bearing on the golden clouds from out the glowing west,
Far floating up an azure sea, like air-ships of the blest;
It waved aloft the bannered spray that wreathed the rushing stream,
Which dying day emblazoned with a rich and ruddy beam,
And seemed to call an echo from the charmed and fragrant air,
As though sweet waves of melody were surging everywhere.

Oh! if the wing of Peace within this dim and troubled sphere
Could stay its rapid flight a while, it well might linger here,
When this dreamy hour comes o'er us, fraught with mystical repose,
And e'en the shades of life will steal the colors of the rose:
It summons to the happy heart all visions that are glad,
And brings long-hidden memories to bosoms that are sad;
Lights up the shrine of ruined hopes, and brightens, for a while,
Its dust and desolation with the shadow of a smile.

An hour when holy thought on dove-like pinions flies away,
To wander on the sunbeam where the golden gates of day
Are closing with the music of a universal prayer,
A mighty anthem rolling on, proclaiming "God is there!"
Where a glory-pencilled radiance, stealing softly through the gloom,
Seems writing on the western sky, "There's bliss beyond the tomb;"
And soaring upward, points us to a love that, truly given,
Is to the erring child of earth the sweetest boon of Heaven.

The "Father of the Waters," rolling on in pomp and pride,
Caressed the sleeping valleys nestled closely by his side,
And kissed the gem-like islands slumbering on his waveless breast,
As it bore majestically on the riches of the West:

Proudly swept the noble waters where, at the close of day,
Encircled in his winding course, the "Crescent City" lay;
And as around her busy shores the shining billows played,
Her mighty heart was throbbing, deep and strong and undismayed.

'T was sweet to see the sunset glow and mantle o'er the stream,
And the mimic billows quiver in its deep refulgent beam:
'T was sweet to list the vesper-song that melted o'er the wave,
As happy bosoms carolled forth the joy that Nature gave:
'T was fair to view the city's spires, as, towering in their pride,
Their lengthening shades lay mirrored on the river's silver side,
Where gallant barks were riding, and its bosom whitening o'er
With snowy wings, which commerce wafts to many a distant shore.

A stately steamer floated there; and as the waters crept
Around her swelling side, it seemed her giant pulses slept,
As lulled to gentle slumber by the softened lullaby
Which evening winds were chanting through the azure-vaulted sky:
Her thunder-voice was silent, and her eye of flame at rest;
The breath of fire lay smouldering in her iron-banded breast;
And we never should have thought her, as she slumbered on the stream,
A dark, deceitful daughter of the subtle fiend of steam.

Upon her form full many an eye was gazing tearfully;
Upon her deck full many a heart was beating fearfully;
And yet that pearly tear was but a dew-drop of regret,
Which faintly whispered—"Once to love is never to forget;"
And if some timid bosom, half distrusting love untried,
Was fain to linger round its own forsaken fireside,
'T was but a moment: fled as drops of night from out the blossom;
And Hope, the angel, woke and smiled on Sorrow's frozen bosom.

The hoary head and bending form came mingled with the throng
Of bounding hearts, and sparkling eyes, and lips of joy and song:
The matron blessed her laughing child, who whiled away the hours,
And wove amid her sunny curls a wreath of autumn flowers;
And childhood's voice of melody was blended with the rush
Of busy care and passion—as the silver fountain's gush
Will murmur on so sweetly in some haunted solitude,
While the tempest's breath is crushing down the monarchs of the wood.

Angelic infancy was there; and lovely was its smile—
So full of purity and truth, so free from shade of guile;
With its blue-veined temples hidden by its waving golden curls,
And its coral lips just parted o'er a few fresh, tiny pearls:

On its cheek a tinge of crimson, like the sunset over snow,
Which pales or deepens sweetly, as the dimples come and go.
Such the mother presses closely to her bosom; and a sigh
Of deep affection whispers—"'T is too beautiful to die."

The smile of God shone over them; and heaven had never seemed
So near that mother's gaze of faith, as while her infant dreamed:
A tear of bliss unspeakable lit up her earnest eye;
And 'mid its silent eloquence, she sought the throne on high.
Her silvery tones fell o'er the heart, as through the twilight dim
Echoes the pealing anthem of the glorious Seraphim;
And a meek and thankful tenderness, as holy as her vow,
Like starry light was resting on her heaven-tinted brow.

The loving and beloved were there; and, standing side by side,
Gazing far into the sunset, were the lover and his bride:
Round their hearts a voiceless melody, a softly breathing pæan,
Seemed floating far away into the boundless empyrean,
And then to fall and melt again upon the dulcet tone,
Which gave their world of happiness a music of its own;
Till tears began to tremble in her eye of liquid blue,
Like sleeping violets laden with the gems of early dew.

His voice was low, and soft, and deep; and like to that which
swells,
So faint and yet so thrilling, from out the rose-lipped shells:
It murmured, while a shade of pride lay hidden in its tone—
"Yes, thou art mine; for ever mine; my beautiful, my own!"
Then listened, lest its breath should break the sweet, bewilder-
ing strain
Of maiden's love to passion's words low answering again:
'T was only such as woman's heart in every age has given—
"With thee, all things are happiness; without thee, what is
heaven!"

The lonely wanderer was there, returned from distant lands;
As one who walks and yet who dreams, upon the deck he
stands:
No pleasant greeting wakes him with a well-remembered
tone:
He gazed upon the gathered crowd, and sighed—"I'm all
alone."
Yet to his soul a "still, small voice" is breathing audibly:
It tells of wife and children in the hallowed sanctity
Of home; and oh! that music to the weary heart was blest;
"For there," he whispered faintly, "will the wanderer be at
rest!"

"Far in the northern sky there floats a pure and snowy cloud,
Whose silvery veilings beautify the heaven they seem to
shroud:

Perhaps its graceful foldings hang above my distant home,
To bear its guardian angels on their kindly missions come:
(Ha! now we move:)—my wayward thought so far away had roved,
It bore my heart before me to the presence of the loved.
I soon shall rest among them: weary, worn, and tempest-tossed"—
A crash! a yell! a storm of blood!—"Great God! the boat —we're lost!"

A mingled cry of wrath and woe, of anguish keen and fell—
It seemed the wailings of the damned had burst the bonds of hell.
Like tongues of demons flashing, streamed the flaming mass on high,
And a last destructive crashing rent the arches of the sky;
Then hoarsely through the wreathing veil of blood and flame and smoke,
The heavy tones of wild despair and dying horror broke:
Soft woman's shriek and manhood's groan were blended in the roar,
As gasping in the surge of death they sank to rise no more.

Down, down upon the fallen rained a storm of blood and fire,
And withering o'er the dying came the steam-fiend's breath of ire;

Fierce desolation burned and flashed from out his soul of gloom,
As glares a demon's eye beneath the shadow of the tomb.
The darkened air grew heavy with its burden deep and dread,
Of quivering flesh, and gasping life, and wailing o'er the dead;
For darker than the battle when the work of death is done,
Was the rage of strong destruction ere its victory was won.

With straining eye, and freezing veins, and lips all deadly pale,
The crash was heard, the shock was felt: the best and bravest quail!
Then suddenly above the wreck a stillness deep and strange—
A silence which the soul might feel, yet never note the change—
Fell o'er it; and there sighed around no wailing of the breeze,
To linger on the bloody shore, or moan among the trees.
A lyre of life lay crushed beneath Azraël's iron will;—
A mighty heart was broken, and its fever-pulse was still.

A sense of cold and mystic dread crept shuddering through the crowd,
As, gazing on the mangled dead, the coffin, and the shroud,
The soul of sweet humanity in horror turned away:
Pale Pity veiled her drooping eye, her sick heart strove to pray;

For arms of might lay helpless there, and prone in blood and dust,
The haughty lip so lately wreathed with confidence and trust;
And Ruin, pale with horror at the wreck his wrath had made,
In mercy gave the mangled mass the death for which it prayed.

Hushed was the gentle mother's prayer, and childhood's silver tone
Was silent all: the soft blue eye was darkened where it shone:
A dying bosom pillowed it; and far beneath the wave,
The loved and loving slumber in a cold and watery grave.
The blooming bride had yielded up her faint and fading breath,
With angel smile that seemed to say, "True love can conquer death."
Her lover clasped with bleeding arm the corpse of Beauty's child,
And met the grave which lurked beneath the flood so dark and wild.

The crescent moon with pallid face looked from the azure sky,
Where the wanderer who had run his race had laid him down to die:
All damp with blood the mass of hair upon his temples spread—
No gentle-bosomed wife was there to raise his dying head;

The mingled shades of life and death flit o'er his features fast:
On one loved name his fading lip still lingered—'t was the last!
The spirit of the wandering man had passed away from earth—
Far other home awaits him than the valley of his birth.

A widowed father, seated on the vessel's shattered deck,
Listed not the madness 'round him, for his being was a wreck.
Beside him stood his daughter, like a lily in its shroud,
Or tiny star upon the verge of some dark thunder-cloud.
She took his icy hand, and "Father, come away," she said:
He heeded not her bird-like voice, his heart was with the dead;
'Twas breaking wildly with a grief, a woe that must be borne;
And his hopes had faded darkly in a night that knows no morn.

He laid a crushed and broken heart on Ruin's burning shrine,
And in a deep libation poured its life-drops forth as wine.
God help him in his agony! and may *her* spirit come
To bless a solitary life, and light a darkened home!
Draw nearer, gentle daughter, to a father's tender love,
And learn to look for mercy and protection from above;
Look back at last upon a path in spotless virtue trod,
And bless the faith that placed thy trust upon the "orphan's God."

The world will soon forget the knell that wails above the dead,
The solemn spell will pass away upon its waters shed;

As when upon the turbid wave the autumn leaves are cast,
So down the rushing tide of Time 't will mingle with the Past
This world is bright to those from whom no joy of life has fled,
But speaks in saddened tones to those who weep the early dead;
And oh! to some this vision brings a train of shadowy fears,
Which march in solemn measure o'er the waste of future years.

When memory flings her shadow pale across the silent stream
Of thought—at first a reverie, then deepening to a dream—
We hear a sweet familiar voice in every wind that sighs,
And feel the presence of the lost when twilight fades and dies.
We dream that when the stars have set, and morning blushes fair,
They sleep upon the tinted cloud like spirits of the air;
They wait our coming in a land whose blossoms never fade—
Where grief's sirocco never comes, nor sorrow casts a shade.

The Years.

Far along
The trackless ether, and the boundless sea
Of wild infinitude, a holy calm
Hung brooding: as a mighty sceptred king
High on the burning throne which overlooks
The realms of void—where shades of nothingness
Are deepened into that we call "the heavens"—
Pale Silence slumbered; and his queen, the Night,
Reclining near him, gracefully flung back
The cloudy tresses from her dusky cheek,
Drooped her soft eye of mystic witchery,
And bowed her star-tiaraed brow to rest
Upon his pulseless bosom. Glorious Night!
Deep hour of passion and of mystery,
Whose breath of flame dissolves the iron chain
Which garish day, and things of earth, must wreathe
Around the panting spirit, and whose touch
Thrills being into ecstacy, and bids us dwell
Amid the wonders of thy brighter world.

The disembodied spirit fears not then
To walk in realms of everlasting light,
And seek its lost loves in a radiant home,
Where rapt archangel and the seraphim
Stand high upon the pearly battlements
Of Paradise—and gazing far away
O'er the blue ocean of the universe,
All glittering with its isles of starry light,
List the rich music of the rolling spheres,
Whose anthem swells along those upper deeps.
A knell resounded on the lyre of Time,
Startling my spirit as it stood alone,
Spell-bound, upon a low and rocky shore,
The cold, bleak margin of a narrow land,
E'en where it met and mingled with the wave
Of an illimitable ocean, deep
And fearful as abysmal space, boundless
As an untold Eternity. Far out
Upon its glowing distance waved and gleamed
A thousand rainbows, wreathing gorgeously
Around bright forms which sported on the wave,
Or seemed to pluck rich treasures from its depths,
And woo the fond beholder to their arms
With strange soft voices, and bewildering smiles.
That gloomy shore on which my spirit stood
Was but the PRESENT; and the ocean wide
Which lay before me in its treacherous sleep,

The unfathomable FUTURE. By my side—
As lightning flashes from its sable shroud,
Or stars spring forth into the evening sky—
A lone and wasted form stood suddenly.
TIME!—by his iron eye, his glass and scythe,
And snowy lock upon his withered brow.
He pointed backward: turning, I beheld
The Present melt away into a land
Of shadows and of silence—'twas the PAST.
Pale, dim, and cheerless seemed that misty realm,
Save where upon its cold blue distance rose
Gray peaks of olden Memories, tinged with light
Of Loves long since departed; and within
Its hidden solitude a hollow voice
Was sounding evermore—a Lethean stream,
Whose mystic murmur syllables the names
Of mighty men; then, rushing onward, whelms
Names, deeds, and fortune, in the cold abyss
Of dark oblivion.
Hark! what haunted cry
Was that which pierced upon my startled ear,
Like the weird neighing of some phantom steed
By wild night-demon driven furiously
Along the black and troubled fields of air?
The Year was dying; and his funeral-wail
Came shuddering on the blast, as down the path
Which leads to things that have been, and are not—

Far down along the dim and vaulted aisles
Where buried Ages sleep, embalmed in dust—
Slowly and sad a wan procession moved.
The weary Year was passing to his rest:
He sat upon his bier; and pallid ghosts
Of the dead Months, his children, bore him on.
No Hopes were round him—they had all been changed
To mourning Memories; and the faces white
Of faded Hours were gleaming ghastly through
The gathering shadows of the Past, which hung
Like a dull drapery o'er his couch of death.
His presence was so chill, the moonlight seemed
To freeze in icy halos round his brow;
And his cold smile was like the wintry beam
On Alpine summits shining, or the glow
Which Beauty hangs upon the faded lip
And wasted cheek of pale Consumption's child.
With feeble hand, upon his frozen breast
He clasped a shattered harp; and o'er its strings
(As one by one its silver chords of life
Gave way mysteriously there) he poured
The faint and fitful melody which filled
His haunted soul, and like a spirit's wail
Its echo died along the midnight wold.
Darkly around him in that hour arose
The ruined towers of lofty purposes,
Which sank into decay long ere their halls

Had been inhabited by actions high;
While loves of "things that were" hung o'er his heart
Like lunar rainbows in the freezing spray
Of some wild mountain torrent, and he felt
The "accusing spirit" whisper mournfully.
And yet his course has been a reign of power,
For high and mighty deeds like meteors gleam
Along his pathway; and the leaden tramp
Of battled thousands thundered on his ear,
While with a blast of lightning breath he struck
Stern tyrants' triumph into cold despair:
With sullen scowl, and dust upon their brows,
He saw the ghosts of fallen Empires sit
Amid the wreck of dynasties and thrones;
And vain philosophies, with systems crushed,
Trampled to dust: consumed upon the shrines
Which their own falsehood reared.

He must be gone:
'T is past, and gloomy Nature now bewails
The proud departed: winds and ocean waves
Will chant his requiem; and the sounding storm
Sweep round the northern mountain's top, to rear,
Of icy columns and eternal snows,
His mighty mausoleum.

Midnight resounded on the lyre of Time,
As through the portals of the shadowy Past
The spirit of the old departed Year

Was lost for ever. As I turned away,
Lo! from the bosom of the Future sprang
His bright young brother, gracefully and light
As did the wave-born Goddess from the sea,
Or stately Pallas from the Thunderer's brow.
A cloudy mantle veiled with drooping fold
The breathing marble of his godlike form;
And glorious beauty rested like a crown
Of angel radiance on his lofty brow.
The joyous feeling of existence, fresh
In its unshadowed buoyancy of life,
Revelled like bounding pulses in his heart;
And waiting on his sunlit smile, young Hopes
Came brightening forth, as the first flowers of Spring
Unfold their leaves when by the south wind stirred.
With strong, impatient hand he smote the lyre
Of young existence; and a wildering gush
Of melody welled forth upon the air
Of midnight, till the vaulted dome of Heaven
And columned arches of abysmal space
Rung with the echoes of his chant sublime.
The hymn was ended; and a countless host
Of glorious visions from the Future's sea
Waved high their rainbow pinions to the breeze,
And thronged upon the Present joyously.
The Young Year smiled a welcome to the band
As gorgeous banners of a bright "To come"

Came floating o'er him; and he stood aloft,
Like a young conqueror in the haughty flush
Of his first victory. Adoration poured
Like incense round him, and a prostrate world
In prayer was at his feet; and tremblingly
Amid its mighty orison was heard
The still, soft murmur of a young, warm heart—
"Grant us, O monarch of the dawning Year,
As onward sweeps the ever-tossing wave
Of being, that the gentle lily leaves
Which float upon its bosom, and enfold
The purest sympathies of guileless hearts,
May never feel the cold and poisoned dew
Exhaled from Earth's chill vapors; and when Love,
The star, looks down upon its troubled deeps,
Teach us to know 't is but a shadow fair,
Whose substance is in heaven; and that we may
Not hope to clasp a phantom which, possessed,
But melts away in coldness and in tears.
Save us from chains that breaking break the heart;
And force it not to drink in gaspingly
The burning agony that sweeps away
Upon its flood the power to *endure:*
In mercy fold not round our bosom's peace
Suspicion's serpent, that for ever stings;
And, drop by drop, within its flaming fold
Must wither up the sympathies of life.

"Give us a lofty and unwavering trust—
Our life's immortal birthright; and the faith
Whose eye can trace through darkest mysteries
The glance of love undying, and the path
Where shines the Beautiful, the Pure, the True.
Give us the breath of flame which kindles up
On heart and soul the glow of fervent thought
And free imaginings; and give us power
To struggle on for that which weaker souls
Deem the far-off and unattainable.

"Like golden clouds which point us to the sun,
Thy light should lead us to Eternity—
Of whose immortal power and glory thou
Art but a dim foreshadowing: lead us then
To that blest region where no broken chord
Can jar upon the music of the spheres;
No tear-drop mingle with the crystal wave
Of life eternal; and there is no shade
To blend with the reflection of a God
Whose darkest shadow is but life and truth
Ineffable.

"So may we live with thee,
That when the hour which feeble mortals dread
Dissolves creation; when the sun shall be
A dim, forgotten thing; and rolling back
Like to a scroll, the firmament is lost;
And stars are shaken from the viewless air

Like tiny dew-drops from the scented leaves
When swaying to the scented breeze of morn;
When thou, with all thy race, shall be destroyed,
Long-perished and forgotten; and the voice
Of mighty Seraphim proclaim aloud—
'Time was, Time is, but Time shall be no more,'
Our souls shall live; and 'mid the eternal choir
Swell high the 'Holy, Holy, evermore,
Lord God Almighty!'"

Love the Old.

I LOVE the old—to lean beside
The antique, easy chair;
And pass my fingers softly o'er
A wreath of silvered hair:
To press my glowing lip upon
The furrowed brow, and gaze
Within the sunken eye, where dwells
The "light of other days:"

To fold the pale and feeble hand
That on my youthful head
Has lain so tenderly—the while
The evening prayer was said:
To nestle down close to the heart,
And marvel how it held
Such tomes of legendary lore,
The chronicles of Eld.

O youth! thou hast so much of joy,
So much of life and love,
So many hopes: age has but one--
The hope of bliss above.
Then turn a while from these away
To cheer the old, and bless
The wasted heart-spring with a stream
Of gushing tenderness.

Thou treadest now a path of bloom;
And thine exulting soul
Springs proudly on, as tho' it mocked
At Time's unfelt control.
But they have marched a weary way
Upon a thorny road—
Then soothe the toilworn spirits ere
They pass away to God.

Yes, love the aged: bow before
The venerable form
So soon to seek beyond the sky
A shelter from the storm.
Ay, love them: let thy silent heart
With reverence untold,
As *pilgrims very near to heaven*,
Regard and love the old.

Hy Brysail.

"The peasantry of Arranmore are still persuaded that, on a clear day, they can see from their coast *Hy Brysail*, or the Enchanted Island."

STRANGER, come; for the noontide glow
Burns o'er the deep sea's shining flow:
The bright blue waves of the summer-time
Break on the rocks with a dreamy chime;
And the white-winged sea-bird glances by
Like a pale shot-star in a golden sky:
Dost see o'er the billows rise the while
The ocean-gem—the Enchanted Isle?

Soft it sleeps in the emerald seas,
Lulled by the lute of the singing breeze,
Veiled with the rainbow's mantling bloom,
Fanned by the spice-gale's rich perfume:
Sweet it slumbers, like Beauty's Queen,
Brightly shrined in the silken sheen
Of her royal couch; and a sunny smile
Lights up the dreams of that Fairy Isle!

When the rich red gold of morning lies
On its whispering woods and its tinted skies,
Sweet songs swell up from the silver streams,
And the air is laden with music-dreams,
Like flute-toned voices that echoed free
In the days of our early infancy;
When the hearts now dark with woe and guile
Were pure and glad as that sun-bright Isle!

When Night steals up from her caverns lone,
And binds the sky with her starry zone,
Our seers have marked, o'er the far blue tide,
A flame-plume crest on the billows ride;
And oft, they say, from the shell-beach floats
A fairy-fleet in their lotus-boats;
And wandering spirits those syrens wile
To the pearl-strewn shores of their Jewel Isle!

And there, they tell us, the sylphs of air
Have deigned to dwell in the grottoes fair:
They wander far through the moonlight bowers,
And slumber deep in the folded flowers:
They dance aloft till their gleaming wings
Like rainbows hang o'er the sparkling springs;
Or circling sweep in a glittering file
The fairy guards of that Elfin Isle!

No note of sorrow, of care, or woe,
Breaks on the bright hour's lapsing flow:
The flame-glance flashing from anger's cloud,
Wild passion-waves in their tossings proud,
The serpent thought from its dismal lair
In a sin-stained heart, may not enter there;
And blest is he whom the fates exile
From this dark shore to that Eden Isle!

The Bird of Paradise.

A SWEET spirit came from the far Eden-bowers,
To dwell for a time 'mid the children of clay:
It sang on the earth for a few summer hours,
As gay as if warbling a Paradise lay.
But the dove to its nest, when the tempest-cloud lowers,
Will haste from the storm and the dark-rolling showers;
So again to her Eden this song-bird of ours,
Unfolding her pinion, has glided away!

A spirit whose beauty and brilliancy darted
Like some wingéd star from the zenith that flies;
And yet the sweet music its life-song imparted
Was soft as the wind-sigh when kissing the skies.
It sang; and the soul from a lethargy started,
To thrill evermore with the pure, angel-hearted
Emotions that dwelt with the lovely departed—
The bird that has flown to her home-Paradise.

Though spring is abroad, and in light-tripping dances
Gay-garlanded pageants to welcome her come;
Though summer in royal regalia advances
To reign as a queen in a sky-vaulted dome;
Though the bloom-blazoned landscape with autumnal glances
Is glowing, or winter her frost-jewel fancies
Flings forth in their beauty, the spell that entrances
Has fled with the bird that has flown to her home.

Though high in the morning the rose-clouds are sweeping,
With light on the hillside, and song on the gale;
Though low in the sunset the twilight is sleeping,
And slumber lies soft on the mountain and dale;
We sigh while Aurora her festival keeping
Rejoices the world; and while Vesper is steeping
The spirit in sweetness, our hearts still are weeping
The lovely and lost one who sleeps in the vale.

O'er that early departure sad spirits were bending;
Yet love could not stay her; its magic was o'er:
A strength from above on her wing was descending,
And spells of the earth-born could bind it no more:
The hymn of her virtues in harmony blending,
A glorious music to loveliness lending,
Sounding on, sounding on, in an anthem unending,
Shall swell to Eternity's uttermost shore.

She sings, blessed bird, by the "clear, crystal" river
Of Life everlasting, through Eden that flows:
She has drank of its stream from the merciful Giver,
Until in the depths of her white bosom's snows
Is wakened the *life* that no time can dissever—
The beautiful *love* that can fade away never—
And the *faith* whose effulgence shall brighten for ever
'Neath the mystical Star that on Bethlehem rose.

"The Bonnie Bairns."

'Neath a midnight sky, where the wild winds sigh
With a weird and a wailing chime,
In her blighted fame knelt a child of shame,
On the lonely shore of Time.
Chill breezes blow o'er her bosom's snow,
But a plague-spot glowed within;
For round her, rolled in a scorching fold,
Lay the serpent-monster, Sin.

Wild dreams come fast of a blissful past,
Ere the tempter's poison breath
Brought a fearful doom to her young heart's bloom—
A bitter and burning death!
She weeps as the thought, with madness fraught,
Strikes fierce through her fevered brain;
For the charméd rest of a tranquil breast
May never be hers again.

Through the heaven afar, on a cloudy car,
By the angel watchers borne,
Knelt the babies bright, which her guilty flight
Had doomed to a life of scorn.
The winds howl loud, but the wreathing cloud,
Like a couch all soft and warm,
Wrapt its shining fold, tinged with wavy gold,
Round each tiny spirit-form.

The sweet starlight, with a lustre bright,
And pure as an angel's vow,
Fell in glittering bands o'er their claspéd hands,
And each curl-swept baby brow.
While in gentle prayer for the lost one there,
Far down on the midnight plain,
Stole a lute-like tone, till their blue eyes shone
Like violets after rain.

"Oh! shining guardian angel
With the star-tiaraed brow,
In our home above the cloud-land,
Shall we meet our mother now?
We grew so cold and weary,
As the stormy night came on;
And the chamber hearth was dreary,
When our mother dear was gone.

"And oh! thou sad, sweet spirit,
With the softly-drooping eyes,
Dost thou weep to think how lonely
Is the home beneath the skies?
But if thou wilt watch beside us,
While the starry tapers burn,
Thou shalt smile, for in the morning
Surely mother will return!

"We know that when the storm-cloud
Brings the chilly winter hours,
It can chase away the song-birds,
And the blossoms from the bowers.
And we know that when the sunbeam
Makes the silver fountain sing,
They all come back to play again,
Amid the merry spring.

"We think our mother's sunny smile
Was brighter than the flowers;
Her singing voice was sweeter far
Than birds in summer bowers;
Now, when they bloom and sing around
The banks of moss and fern
Where we have played together,
Will not mother too return?

"They say her brow is clouded,
And her eye is dim with tears:
She who loved us both so dearly,
Is it not for us she fears?
And they say she left us strangely,
That she did us cruel ill;—
Ah! sure they judge her wrongly—
Is she not our mother still?

"You take us to a radiant home—
If mother only knew
That *we* were blest and happy there,
She would be happy too.
And oh! if you would tell her now
How she this way might learn,
Which leads us up to God and heaven,
How soon would she return!"

The Orphan's Home.

WHERE dwellest thou?—in smiling, summer valleys,
Where singing streamlets wander, sweetly wild,
And west winds whisper through the shaded alleys,
Thine only playmates, fair and lonely child?
Where softly fall the snowy blossom-showers,
Shook from the fragrant orchard's leafy dome,
And every garden gleams with rarest flowers,
In cultured beauty?—"Nay, not *there* my home."

Then dwellest thou where, fold on fold unfurling,
Like a rich banner to the morning light,
The sun-emblazoned mists are proudly curling
Around the summit of yon breezy height?
Art thou, young wanderer, child of mist and mountain,
Haunting the palaces of sylph and gnome—
Lone dwelling, where the forest-fairy's fountain
Flings up its spray-wreath?—"Nay, not *there* my home."

List! stealing from the far and moonlit ocean,
A murmur as of multitudes in prayer:
There Nature offers up the deep devotion
That thrills her heart—perchance thy home is there.
Does not the music of the pine-grove, broken
By deeper anthems from the surging foam,
Bring to thy lonely bosom some sweet token
Of friends and kindred?—"Nay, not *there* my home."

See! where the verdant prairie, wide extending,
Sweeps the horizon like an emerald sea,
With gorgeous-tinted flowers on it blending,
As though the rainbow-spirits, wild and free,
Forgetful of their task, (the light adorning
Of universal Nature's mystic tome,)
Were sleeping on its waves, and dewy morning
Revealed the truants;—say, is there thy home?

"Nay, nay, the orphan's home is not reposing
By vale or mountain, by the ocean blue,
Nor where the prairie's blossoms are unclosing,
But in the heart-homes of the *kind and true.*
On earth she has none other; yet the spirit,
When rests her weary heart beneath the sod,
A radiant home in glory shall inherit—
A home with immortality and God!"

Leonore.

[In the cemetery of one of our Southern cities there is a lonely monument bearing this inscription—"*The Child of Misfortune.*"]

Deeply the midnight knelleth
O'er the wold:
Hoarsely its echo swelleth,
Dull and cold,
Down where a dead heart dwelleth
In the mold:
They wail o'er woes unspoken,
And implore
Peace for the lost, heart-broken
Leonore!

Darkly the night-cloud scowleth,
Hid from sight—
Through it the old moon prowleth,
Wan and white;
And the far tempest howleth
Round the night.

Owls high up in the haunted
Sycamore
Echo a name wind-chanted—
"LEONORE!"

The spectral tombs grow dimmer;
And the stone
That marks thy grave doth glimmer
All alone,
As star-beams o'er it shimmer—
Then are gone.
Thy soul-shriek last and lonely
From the shore
Of Time, thy God heard only—
LEONORE!

Up from the moaning river,
Sounds of doom
Knell to the shades that shiver
Through the gloom:
Bowed where the yew-trees quiver
O'er thy tomb.
Closely the damp moss creepeth—
Twining o'er
Thy bosom as it sleepeth,
LEONORE!

There, folds of darkness rustle
Like a pall—
There, 'mid the reed and thistle,
Shadows fall;
And the rude night-winds whistle
Over all,
Laughing to scorn the faded
Days of yore
That saw thee die degraded,
LEONORE!

Dread as the fires unholy
That scathe and stain,
The plague-spot sin burned slowly
In heart and brain;
Till the soul's light sank lowly
As stars that wane.
Oh! shalt thou be forgiven
Nevermore,
Nor find thy rest in heaven,
LEONORE?

The Mausoleum.

"From memory's chambers the forms of the Past,
The joys of my childhood rush by on the blast;
And the lost one whose beauty I used to adore,
To my heart seems to murmur—No more, never more!"

Midnight: a pilgrim spirit stands alone
In Memory's temple. Vague and shadowy,
O'er ruined shrine and altar, shines the star
Of Destiny, revealing mournfully
Fair, faded treasures which the heart has striven
To rescue from decay. Gray-tinted dreams,
Which erst like glory-blazoned banners waved
Upon the winds of morning, mouldering hang
From the far dusky dome: remembrances,
In faint and fitful breezes, shudder through
The hollow-sounding aisles. No solitude
Is drear as that where sighs a wailing wind—
No heart so lone as that whose hidden vaults
Are haunted by a moaning memory!

The bell strikes one: 't is like the ghostly cry

Of the wild, warning Banshee. Down the aisles,
Deep-strewn with dying roses, broken gems,
And sullied plumes, the pallid spirit glides.
Its star of destiny is veiled and dim:
The sad breeze chills it; and the banner-dreams,
With mildew dropping downward, strike its brow
Like the dank horror of the bat's black wing
In some cold cavern. Still it falters not:
Till kneeling by a tomb with drooping plumes,
From its pale, parted lips steals forth a strain
Of mourning melody, like buried love's
Low-chanted miserere.

"Far away,
Upon a distant shore, thine early grave
Was hollowed by the stranger: close and still
The damp mould wraps thee; and the moonbeams lie
All tenderly upon it, like the wan,
White hand of Silence. *Here*, one year ago
To-night, and thou wert laid to rest beneath
This mausoleum lone; and I have watched
Each passing day, as sands of Time, that fell
In thy deep sepulchre, like icy clods
Upon the coffin-lid. Pale Memory
And paler Pity strew thy tomb with flowers,
And weep above thee—though the phantoms dire
Of sin, and shame, and sorrow, darkly cower
Beside the monument.

"Ah! thine was not
The love that from the holy vesper-star
Steals in a silvery shadow softly down
To the white lily's bosom; nor the wind
That lightly dallies with the violet;
Nor yet the bee at noontide slumbering
In the sun-folded tulip's honeyed heart.
'T was passion; and it sank into my soul
As strikes the lightning-flash into the wave,
And turns the common pebbles in its deeps
To molten jewels: yet it was a flame
That burned in water, where it could not wake
Returning flame. 'T was lightning; and its home
Was in the cloud and tempest: o'er the stream
Of my sweet childhood gloomily it hung
As shadows from a fallen angel's wing;
And waves that caught the fiercely beautiful
Reflection, trembled to their secret springs.
That proud, dark pinion came between my soul
And heaven: shut out the sun, the earth, and all
Save the wild lustre of thy burning eye,
Full of strong witchery, like wandering fire
Far-shining down a fathomless abyss
In which we long to plunge—then turn away,
Heart-sick and shuddering at the fearful spell.
Yet oft my spirit, gazing on thy proud
And glorious beauty, asked of holy Heaven

What great good it had done, that it should be
Blest with a love like thine? 'T was mockery all:
A cold and cunning curse; for till my heart
Could brave the wrath of an offended God,
It might not dare to love thee!

"So thy life
Has perished, like a bold, free mountain-stream
O'erwhelmed by lava-torrents pouring forth
From the volcanic heart: all blackened now—
All dust and ashes. Living, I was made
To dread thee deeply: dead, I pity thee,
And weep thy melancholy destiny.
Thou gavest my mind its gems; my folded heart
Its budding blossoms; and my soul its wings
Of lofty aspiration: they have shone,
And bloomed, and soared, but not for thee: they lie
Strewn on the world's cold altars, and around
Thy colder sepulchre, within the fane
Of Memory!"

The Sullied Name.

Far, far away 'neath stranger skies,
Upon a monumental stone
Deep-sculptured, cold and white it lies—
Unloved, unheeded, and alone.
For passing thousands come and part,
Yet reck not of its pride or shame;
Or how 't would wring *one* living heart,
To echo *there* that sullied name.

Within those old familiar halls,
Where mingled childhood's smiles and tears,
Still meet again, as Friendship calls,
The loving band of other years;
And *thou*, amid them once so proud,
So rich in all that love may claim,
They fear to mention thee aloud,
For thine is a forbidden name.

Some spirits in that gathered band
  Have scaled Ambition's giddy steep;
And others wander, hand in hand,
  Where Love's elysian valleys sleep.
Deep in the damp, destroying mould,
  Thy heart forgets its blighted fame;
Nor heeds that only marble cold
  Can dare to speak thy sullied name.

Thine was a glowing spirit bright,
  And like the "midnight sun," it trod
A brilliant circle; yet its light
  Ne'er sought the zenith, near its God!
A fettered agony was thine—
  Despairing love's consuming flame;
And she who woke it keeps a shrine,
  Where Pity weeps thy clouded name.

Too much of earthly passion slept
  Within thy dark, mysterious eye;
And when the fierce sirocco swept
  Thy heart, it could but break and die.
Thy bosom, by a fiend possessed,
  Became a hell which naught could tame;
Whose branding signature impressed
  Thine ashes with a blighted name.

'T is true thou wast not stainless, like
Thy *judges*, but a child of clay;
Yet God, in mercy, did not strike
Thine image from His Book away!
He kept thee from the deeps of sin—
He quelled thy spirit's maddening flame;
And yet the plague-spot burned within,
Which gave to dust thy sullied name.

Two sepulchres hast thou: alone,
The city's thousand graves amid,
Is one; the other more unknown,
Deep in a marble bosom hid.
Then rest thee! Rest at least is thine,
For those who wronged thee cease to blame;
And she who wept, has still a shrine
That purifies thy sullied name!

Song of the Sylphide.

Wake! from thy dewy rest,
Bright Spirit-Love!
Orion's starry crest
Glows from above.
Luna is wandering
White round her car;
Cloud-streams meandering
Float from afar.

List! to the music-spell!
Midnight sublime
Calls, with a choral swell,
"Spirit! 't is time!"
Haste, ere its echo far
Dies o'er the tide;
Like a swift glory-star,
Speed to thy Bride!

Come! for her eye of blue
  Slumbers eclipse;
Steeped in their honey-dew
  Tremble her lips.
Soft as a fairy voice
  Steals through her dream;
Sweet shall her heart rejoice—
  Thou art its beam.

Rest! now thy spirit-wing,
  (Like a snow-blossom,)
Weary with journeying,
  Droops o'er her bosom.
Sleep! in thine angel grace,
  Think not to roam;
Here is thy dwelling-place,
  This is thy home!

The Spirit-Lovers.

The twilight deepened; and its dusky shades
Crept through the crimson of the sunset clouds,
To nestle darkly where some shining star
Looped up the gorgeous foldings, as they hung
Like Eden-banners, waving far around
The purple arches of a southern sky.

From the deep forest aisles came up the wind,
Low singing, in its wandering, with the voice
Of softly chiming waves and whispering leaves.

The silver moon came floating from the East,
Like a young angel sleeping on the wing,
Whose dream-smile glittered o'er the dewy earth,
And, trembling through an open casement, kissed
A brow of maiden beauty slumbering there.

The silken drapery of her couch was tossed
In crimson waves around her; while above
Fell snowy veilings, floating like a wreath
Of silvery mist upon a rosy sea.
Carelessly graceful, in her soft repose

She rested like a lily on the tide,
That droops, o'erwearied with its own perfume.
The dew of early youth was gleaming yet
Upon her pure heart-blossoms; and the first
Faint glow of love within her spirit, wrought
Rich blazonry upon their mystic leaves.
She watched the sunlight fade upon the hills,
The star-flames kindle in the dusky sky;
And now she rested in the land of dreams,
To wait the coming of her Spirit-Love.
In slumber, from that softly sculptured form
Her radiant soul in bright expression stole,
As from the veiling of a pearly cloud
Rises the angel of the evening star.
As parts the spirit from its dreaming clay,
The air grew subtle as a charmed perfume,
The moonlight radiant with a gleam of wings.
He came—a vision whose bewildering eyes
Seemed light ineffable in midnight skies—
While plumes of waving frost, bedropped with gold,
Quivered and glittered 'mid the flashing folds
Of woven radiance floating round his form.
Snow-flake and fire-drop, wreathing into life
His gorgeous pinion, shadowed o'er his love;
And, as he bowed his star-tiaraed brow,
His breath was on her cheek,—his beaming glance
Stole through the visions of her dreaming soul,

As when, at eve, the passion of the sun
Glows o'er the bosom of the floating cloud,
Till love's wild worship wakes returning flame,
And each in burning blushes dies away!

As a fair volume, and a golden lyre,
Wreathed by the tendrils of an opening rose,
Her mind, and soul, and fresh, expanding heart,
Lay bright before his spirit-searching ken.
As one by one he softly laid aside
The crimson petals of that folded heart,
To drink the honeyed fragrance of its love,
The rose-bud thrilled, and trembled into bloom—
Its breeze his sigh, its sun his burning glance;
Its dew-drop life his kisses wild and warm.

He lingered o'er the pure, unsullied leaves
Of Mind's mysterious volume; and there came,
Where'er he breathed upon the spotless page,
Bright gems of glowing fancy and deep thought,
As magic characters come stealing forth
In loveliness, before the breath of flame!
His being brightened with a godlike smile,
As, closely blended with each pictured thought,
His image, flashing into glorious life,
Smiled back upon him from the glowing page
So truthfully; then, with the soft excess
Of dreamy rapture 'wildered, fainting bowed,
And blessed the sweet love-mirror silently.

Her soul in beauty, an Æolian lyre,
Gleamed forth before him, where the voice of Song
Slept like its spirit in a singing shell.
His light, caressing pinion swept its chords,
And Joy's bird-carol, Hope's aërial chime,
Pride's sounding anthem, and the pæan bold
Of young Ambition, rolled in glory forth.
He breathed upon it, and anon there rose
(As tears will gush from rapture-laden hearts)
Her pure religion's diapason deep,
Soft under-tones of dreamy melancholy,
And chords of feeling that erewhile had slept
In voiceless music; and o'er all the theme—
An ever-changing, ever-sounding theme—
Was first, immaculate, immortal Love!

The Spirit-Bridal.

The Night had closed her eye of softest blue,
And, like a wearied infant, sunk to rest
On Nature's gentle bosom. Silence pale,
With one white finger on her marble lip,
From which no lightest murmur ever came,
Was bending o'er the dim, slow-stealing death
Of every sound; and even Echo dreamed,
As though a spirit's wand had charmed her there
To slumber, deep as that Creation held
When Night was in the heavens!

Still as the moonlight quivered through the vines
That overhung the casement, it revealed
The rosy couch beneath its silvery veil,
As by its side the maiden knelt to pray.
Oh! if there be on earth one blessing left,
One leaf from out a faded Paradise,
One ray of glory from the heaven we lost,—
It is that we may pray for those we love!

Without it man may live—his nature knows
No soft dependence: panoplied in self,
His haughty heart may burn to dash aside
The hand that formed it; and he may defy
The love that made him what he is—a god!
But *woman* never; for her ivy soul
Must have an oak to cling to—proud and high
Its crest may be, or ruined, lightning-scathed:
It matters not—and for it she must pray.
Prayer is her nature's pure necessity,
To calm the sorrow that with lava-streams
Pours its bewildering torrent o'er the soul;
And when she feels it crushing darkly through
A bosom all too soft to stem the tide
Of bitter, burning waters, then for strength
To "suffer and be still," that bosom prays.
And oh! when human love has taught her heart
To dream of *one* and *heaven*, how pants her soul
To pour that gushing feeling freely forth,
In all its deep intensity, before
The "God of love" who gave it!
'T was for this
The gentle maiden meekly knelt to God,
Till each sweet love-beam of her violet eye
Seemed melting into passion's orison.
Warm feeling folded up its starry plumes,
To bow before the altar-shrine of faith;

And holy hopes looked from the golden shades
That lay upon her soul, as angels bend
O'er the bright foldings of a snowy cloud,
To woo us to the sky, from whence they come.
Her eye grew dreamy, and her bosom heaved,
As though within its cell some pleasant thought
Were singing; and it rose and fell upon
The waves of that delicious melody.
Her loosened hair swept o'er the sacred page;
And as her soul went up in whispers low,
It stirred the shadows with the breath of prayer.
She oped the holy book; and while her lip
Trembled upon the words, they sank within
Her woman's nature, as the snow-flake falls
And melts into the earth's warm bosom.
Time,
Upon his wanderings, had sighed the hour
Of "twelve," and for a moment midnight's hush
Grew tremulous; and echo, as it fell,
Swept o'er the tension of her listening ear,
Softly and thrillingly, and like to Love's
First breathings o'er an unawakened heart.
Her voice grew fainter: a responsive vow
Stole sweet upon the cadence of her own:
She felt the glory of an angel-wing
Around her waving, and she knew the hour—
Her Spirit-Lover claimed his Spirit-Bride!

With pinions intertwining, arms enwreathed,
And fervid glances bathed in passion's dream,
They swept along the cloud-land pathway, where
The constellations from their silver urns
Poured incense-light far down the "Milky Way;"
And o'er its misty pavement Luna flung
Ten thousand rainbows, like the wreathing bloom
Of bridal blossoms.

Still they floated on,
Far through the starry armaments that sweep
In endless circle round the battlements
Of Paradise—an everlasting guard,
High flaming round the Infinite: at length,
Within the presence-chamber of the Blest,
Amid its crowned and mighty multitude,
They knelt before the great Unchangeable,
Whose love and mercy whispered audibly,
"*For ever be ye one, as God is one!*"

The Child of Song.

Wake, soul of Beauty! wake to join the armaments of mind;
Seek light within the burning stars, and freedom from the wind;
Press strongly up the tangled way, and dare the toiling strife
That gathers round thee darkly 'mid the wilderness of life:
Fear naught but *failure*—win thy crown from opposition's wrath,
And garlands of its lightnings weave, to strew along thy path!

Be thou the searching wind that wanders up the vaulted sky,
Where to thy earnest quest for Truth the singing stars reply:
Go drain the gulfs of Soul, or scale the pinnacles of Mind—
There's rest for weaker natures: *thine* hast left repose behind:
Go seek for sparkling gems of thought where passion's ocean raves;
And bring us jewels of the heart from out their burning graves.

Take up the volume, "Human Life," and read its mystery well;
For in thy charmed existence sleeps the secret of its spell:

Exert the strength immortal in thy spirit's depths concealed,
Nor moulder like the rock away, in power unrevealed:
Call up ten thousand echoes to thy glory's rushing strain,
Nor slumber 'mid thy wasted gifts, by God bestowed in vain.

And when the chainless flow of soul swells passionate and strong,
O'erwhelming thy enchanted life, O dreaming child of Song!
Give the cold altars of the world thy streams of living fire,
Pour out thy overflowing heart upon the quivering lyre,
Fling forth thy flaming treasures brought from feeling's fervid zone,
But ask no bosom to bestow a passion like thine own!

The hollow, honeyed meed of praise whose melody is thine,
Can yield no tone of deeper lays for which the gifted pine:
Then hide thy vacant heart beneath a veil of careless glee:
Conceal the void: earth cannot fill its aching agony.
Oh, hope not *here* to win such love as thou could'st die to give;
Yet droop not, falter not, proud soul—to battle is to live.

The world, which in thy pilgrimage has seemed so loth to bless,
Or spare one little draught of unembittered tenderness,
To cool with pure, delicious drops thy frenzied fever-dream,
Or soothe thine agonizing thirst with sweet affection's stream;
Will give thee vain, regretful tears—how fruitless then and wild!—
When heaven's home has sheltered o'er its bright, neglected child!

Anniversary Ode.

I. O. O. F.

Angel-queen upon the earth—
  Heaven-descended charity!
Crowned immortal at thy birth—
  Born to reign eternally!
We, thy vassal-champions, now
Breathe the deep, undying vow
    Of fealty to thee:
Great triune, whose mystic sign
Emblems three in one entwine;
For "Friendship, Love, and Truth" combine
    Thy bright Divinity!

Summoned not by clarion-peal,
  Not by wild alarum-bell;
Gathering not with clash of steel,
  And the war-wolf's maddening yell.
Signal-note where "Brethren" come
Rolls not in the thundering drum,

L. of C.

Or howling, bloody swell:
Where a dark and demon-swarm
Charging squadrons fiercely form;
And rises o'er the battle-storm
A nation's funeral-knell!

But, where round the couch of death
Steals the widow's lonely sigh;
Where a father's parting breath
Wakes the orphan's wailing cry—
Thine the voice that bids us share
All their sorrow, all their care,
To every ill a foe:
Led by thee, we thus engage,
Blooming youth and manhood sage,
Now and ever still to wage
War with *Want* and *Woe*.

The Frost-King's Festival:

OR,

THE FATE OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

FAR northward, in the midnight's purple dome,
Flashes the Pole-star, pure and softly bright,
As 't were some virgin spirit, newly sprung
From infinite existence, and as yet
Untainted by a prison-shrine of clay.
Dazzlingly beautiful the pulseless scene
Outspread beneath it, where the cold earth lay
Like radiant beauty in a deathlike swoon,
Freezing the kisses which her starry love
Seemed wildly pressing on her icy brow
And marble bosom. Toiling on among
The white, aërial mountains of the cloud,
Wan and bewildered, came the pallid moon;
Encountering on some dizzy precipice
The frantic phantom of the northern wind,

With piercing breath and fiercely gleaming eye,
Whose keen expression mocked the waving blue
Of air-drawn cimeters. Along the wold
The moonbeams quivered on the spangled snow—
Hollow and vacant as the studied smile
Of fawning sycophancy—bright, yet false
As glittering sophistry—while far around
Cloud-crested pinnacles of ice arose,
Like woman's spirit's when 'tis dead to love,
And sparkles in the shining agony
Of young Ambition's amaranthine crown!
The fettered breezes, lulled to leaden sleep,
Woke no faint music: still the waters lay,
As mighty purpose chains an iron peace
Upon the ebb and flow of passion's wave.
So silent all, you might have heard the sound
Of Time's light footfall, or the stealthy tread
Of Destiny: it was the dreamless calm
And stillness of the grave, without its damp,
Destroying mould. On the pellucid plain
Towered high a temple's vast aërial fane:
On silver columns of the moonlight sheen,
Dome over dome ascending pierced the mist
Of cloudy crystalline which formed the roof,
And slowly waved in signal-banners fair
From adamantine towers, and battlements
Of lucid pearl. Around its capitol

Rich rainbow tracery of frost-work wreathed,
And diamond spirals in the quivering light
Hung downward like a heavy fringe of gems.
Its base was bastioned by a frozen sea;
And stranded near it, a deserted barque
Lay slowly mouldering into cold decay:
Its sentinels the waves—a white-plumed band
Of ocean-warriors rushing to the shore
From out the crested armies of the deep,
And captured by the iron hand of Frost.

Now, where the palace lightning-lustre streamed,
Came trooping o'er the wild of dreary waves,
And dim air-desert's icy solitude,
The ghastly phantom-dwellers of the Pole.
On swift-winged coursers of the restless gleam—
Which Borealis, with his arrowy beam,
Drives through the silver of the polar air—
They gathered, like the mocking fiends that crowd
The death-dream of the pilgrim lone, who sinks
To slumber on some hanging avalanche,
Where Danger hovers on the dizzy verge,
And cowers, and beckons to Destruction dark,
That sleeps beneath them, down the black abyss
A thousand fathoms low. The moonlight pressed
Its lifeless kisses through ethereal brows
And white, transparent bosoms, as they shone
Through robes of shadowy silver—o'er bright locks

Far streaming like a comet's flashing hair;
But woke no passion in the strange, wild eyes
That glared around so weird and fearfully.
Some looked a harrowing shriek; and some
A stony wailing: others yet expressed
That vague, dim sighing of the midnight wind
Which wakened troubled dreams; and others shone
With naught but cold and glittering loneliness.
Still sweep they onward: summoned there to hold
High festival in honor of their king;
And echo back the doom his wrath pronounced
Upon the bold adventurers who dared
To pierce his empire of eternal snows.

Wild rang the revel, and the white wine flowed:
Smiles glistened fitful in the dazzling dance;
But hollow, heartless, and devoid of joy:
False as the tongue and eye when bigot Power
Has set its seal upon the lip of Truth.

The king was on his throne—before him ranged
The rash intruders on his solitude:
Frozen and unimpassioned, spiritless,
No life in his snow-shrouded bosom beat;
But sullen joy crept through its stony heart,
Like a cold scorpion writhing through a rock:
His glances, keen and glittering, pierced the soul
As twice ten thousand daggers' sparkling points
Upon a naked bosom. Scowling round,

The monarch rose—a dwarfed and gloomy shade,
Wild, elfish, and incomprehensible
As is the muffled voice of mystery.
Pale glory rested on his iron brow
And "lightning-braided" pinions; but the dread
Lurked in the wreathing of his sneering smile.
He spoke: his voice was not in truth a sound,
But like the memory of some hoarsest peal
Which dying thunder laughs in mockery
Above the howl and hiss of homeless waves:—

"Captives, rest—the search is ended:
Strength has faded, hope is lost:
Lorn, forsaken, undefended
Prisoners in the realms of Frost!
Did ye well to brave the danger
Of the icy northern sky?
Dared ye thus to tempt the anger
Of a monarch such as I?

"Saw ye not the glacier lowering;
Felt ye not its curdling breath;
And the sailing icebergs towering—
Rainbow citadels of death?
Feared ye not the phantoms drooping
Dimly o'er the western wave,
Or the ghastly shadows trooping
From their misty eastern cave?

"Dread ye not the lurid terror
Scowling o'er the driving cloud?
Wandering shapes of human error,
See—he weaves your shining shroud!
Trust ye not for power to flee him;
For, in ages yet to be,
Snows shall pile your mausoleum—
Rapid, strong, and silently!

"'Mid the whirlwind-peopled mountains,
Lost for ever ye remain,
Like the frost-enchanted fountains,
Slumbering 'neath an icy chain.
Live, live on; but hope ye never
To retrace the path ye crossed:
Lorn, forsaken, and for ever
Captives to the King of Frost."

Pale Silence, frightened by that dreary voice,
Fled shuddering up the arches of the sky;
And Midnight, sleeping on her starry throne,
Startled a moment, listed, and then sank
Again to heavy and bewildered dreams.
Anon, the blue and freezing billows quaked
With horror, like a murderer's livid lips,
When at the hour of dread he hears the cry
And groan of victims, stifled in the tomb.

Not so the sentenced to that sullen doom:
Of courage high, determination strong,
And spirits unsubdued, they met the dire
And withering glance of Desolation's eye
Unshrinking—tho' they seemed to list the step
Of Fate approaching—tho' their eyes grew dim
As stars that shine on misery; and the blood,
In life's last fountain curdling, slowly crept,
Like to a cold and aching agony
Of writhing death-worms.

'T was perchance despair
That gave them power to suffer and be strong—
A trust in Heaven, it may be; or perhaps
A hope of rescue, when all hope was dead.
Like adamantine statues stood the band;
For why?—their leader quailed not; but *his* heart
Forgot the scene around him: far away,
On "merrie England's" island shore, he saw
Home, friends, and kindred; and at last alone
A soft, love-lighted eye, that swam in tears,
And gazed in sadness o'er the waters blue.

He left us as some high and daring thought
Springs glowing from the armaments of Mind,
And seeks to scan the Infinite: it flames,
It soars, it darkles through the trackless void,
And droops at last, degraded and forlorn,
On some far shore of blank uncertainty!

Song.

When Aurora's plumes are waving,
Come to me;
With thy passion-spell enslaving,
Come to me;
When the sun the sky is paving,
All in crimson glory laving,
And my soul thy sweet love craving,
Come to me.

When the star of eve is shining,
Come to me;
And the lovely day declining,
Come to me;
With thine arm around me twining,
And thy glance my soul divining—
Oh! my heart for thee is pining—
Come to me.

When the crescent moon is beaming,
Come to me;
When Orion's crest is gleaming,
Come to me;
When, like shapes of angel seeming,
Far the white-robed clouds are streaming,
And my love of thee is dreaming,
Come to me.

When the midnight chime is pealing,
Come to me;
And my drooping form is kneeling,
Come to me;
When, to God alone revealing,
Softly gush the waves of feeling,
And my prayer for thee is stealing,
Come to me.

When mine eye in death is shaded,
Come to me;
Breathe no sigh by sorrow laded
Over me;
But when life—so darkly braided,
Stained with sin, by earth degraded—
Into holy heaven has faded,
Come to me.

To "Pattie."

Cousin sweet!
Thy gentle greeting o'er my bosom steals
As softly as the wild-bird's roundelay;
And my heart thanks thee, as it would that bird,
With tender tribute—glad and happy tears!
Thou art beside me, with thy tresses like
The golden flash of waters; with thy cheek
Of pearly roses; and thine eye where heaven
Burns in its own blue lustre. Flashing far
From out its deeps of dreamy mystery,
Bright feelings sparkle, like the radiance caught
From broken rainbows. Thine angelic soul
Wears the deep glory of its native sky,
And flings its rich reflection over mine.
"Eyes are love-orbs"—because they gaze on thee:
When pulses throb, 't is but to answer thine;
And if my brow were e'er "an angel-home,"
'T was when its bright-winged visions bore my soul

To thine embrace, and soothed its rest upon
Thy soft and snowy bosom.
Life with us
Is in its blushing morning; yet diverse
Upon each glowing heart-existence falls
Its light and shade. Thou hast a happy home,
And friends who woo thee with their sunny smiles
And soothing voices; and thy gentle life
Is one long day of sunshine. May it ever be!
For thou, in thine unshadowed loveliness,
Deserv'st it well. And if one passing thought
Of me should pain thee, gentle one, forget;
Nor even dream of her who, like a wild
And free zingara, wanders forth alone
Through life's wide labyrinthine solitudes,
A homeless child, yet happy; for she calls
From Nature's world-wide halls a thousand friends,
And twice as many playmates. Her young soul
Springs to the sun as though he were her sire,
And she, exulting, were the crownéd child
Of glory and of flame. The star of eve
Steals through the sunset with her mother's smile;
And from the purple midnight swiftly comes
A spirit of the breeze, to clasp her form
With viewless pinions, and to press its warm
And dewy kisses on her lip and brow.
Ah! ne'er was lover's tone so soft, so sweet,

As is the low-voiced night-wind; never could
Deep passion's mute caresses wake her heart
To wilder raptures.
I could wish for thee
A chainless life, a charmed existence, where
Bright hopes are only formed to fade away
In glad fruition; each enchanted hour
A glowing heart-throb; every deep-drawn breath
Laden with overflowing happiness!
And now, farewell! I press my lip to thine,
Rosy and passionate: dost hear its soft
"God bless thee?"

Greenwood Graves.

INSCRIBED TO MRS. LE M——, OF "GREENWOOD."

COME, when the star-eyed evening softly flingeth
Her rich, rose-tinted veil upon the waves;
When the wind-spirit on its pinion bringeth
A fitful music from the forest caves.
Come, where the myrtle-vine in beauty springeth;
And like a gleam of sunshine, when it laves
The spring's first garland, close the green moss clingeth
Around the bosom of thy greenwood graves.

O'er the dim, dewy veil of willows drooping,
The forest boughs hang like a verdant cloud;
And pale, pale roses o'er the marbles stooping,
Gleam like the moonlight on a snowy shroud.
Along the tree-tops bright the sunset quivers,
And through the hushed yet whispering solitude,
There comes a murmur as of far-off rivers,
Deep flowing through the silent summer wood.

Far down the west the castle-clouds are burning,
And the rich air is heavy with perfume;
While through the forest shadows, home-returning,
Sweeps the swift rush of many a sounding plume.
Here timid violets, closely intertwining,
Peep from the verdure of their fragrant bed;
And the young star-flower, white, and clearly shining,
Points to the cradle of thine early dead.

O lady, now thy heart is fondly dreaming
Of faded hours, when through this woodland shade
A band of children gathered round thee, gleaming
Like wingéd fairies from the forest glade.
When the quick fall of little feet fell lightly
As summer rain-drops on the grassy lawn,
And laughing eyes peeped out, as wild and brightly
As the shy glances of the startled fawn.

'T was vain to stay the gush of tears descending,
When, in their beauty, thou didst lay them there;
And yet 't is well—thou 'lt never see them bending
Beneath a weight of sorrow, woe, or care.
Thine other children round the hearth-stone springing
Will love thee, yet may not with thee abide;
They go like young birds from the home-nest winging,
But these—thy dead—sleep ever by thy side.

The drop of dew from out the morning blossom,
Touched by the early sunlight, upward flies:
So those pure souls, from thy protecting bosom
Passed to the glory of their native skies.
And though thy woman's nature, fond and shielding,
Might weep the loss of treasures lately given,
Thy mother's heart found comfort, e'en when yielding,
All pure and bright, its angels up to heaven.

The Lyre of Time.

MIDNIGHT, 1ST JANUARY.

God has crushed
Another chord from out the mighty harp
Of sounding ages; and its dying wail
Comes stealing on the midnight, fainter far
Than Echo's self—the shadow of a sound.
The birth of Time was music, when the stars,
God's high orchestra, pealed the overture
To young Creation's drama; and the hour
When "Time shall be no more," shall die away
'Mid trumpet-thunders, marshalling in hosts
From every realm, the armies of the Lord!

The "silver chord" is loosed. The parting year—
With all its wild and fitful melody,
Its mingled harmony of joy and woe,
And constant chorus of continual change—
Is hushed for ever; while the lyre of Time,
Now strung anew by the Omnipotent,

Awaits His breath to swell the symphonies
Emblazoned on the Future's folded page.
Old shattered harp-string! crushed to silence now,
Thy many-braided music! cold and still
Thine ever-pealing anthem! Rapture swelled
A while thy rich bird-carol; Sorrow sighed;
Hate, hoarsely howling, blended with the lute
Of Love's low murmur, as it wept from thee
Like dew on lily leaflets. Here the gush
Of festal freedom mingled in the strain
Of holy adoration, and the wail
Of dying dirges crept along the chime
Of choral bridal-bells. A boding tone
Met panting passion's rolling rhapsody;
And harrowing voices from the shrieking shades
Smote sharply on the pæan, pealing proud
In haughty victory. 'Mid them all arose
The frantic yell of "dissolution" dire;
And Freedom trembled in her mountain-hold;
Her banner wavered on its craggy height;
Her eagle faltered on his pinion bold,
And screamed with terror through the rushing night,
Until the fearful cry swept wildly on,
And died above the grave of WASHINGTON!

God has made
A wilderness of worlds! His will, and strong

Creative Spirit, shook ten thousand orbs
Like golden dew-drops from His waving wing,
To roll in beauty thro' abysmal space,
And chant the chorus of His love divine.
He made the "Milky-Way" to span the sky—
A pearly bow of promise—every drop
That sparkles in it, is a shining world!
He woke the music of the Northern Harp—
The wild, weird chiming of the Pleiades;
And bade the arches of a Southern sphere
Reverberate their hallelujahs high.
Where bold Orion rears his crested brow,
And bears his burning falchion thro' the night;
Or red Arcturus, with his foot of wind,
Gives chase eternal to the monsters grim
That circle round the Pole—there, like a fierce
And maddened glory, streams the comet-star—
A laurelled victor sweeping thro' the blue,
Triumphal arch of heaven, with crimson flags
Of Borealis floating o'er him. From
The swift-winged meteor on his barb of flame,
Careering down the cloudy paths of air,
To some faint fire-mist, darkling on the verge
Of blank infinitude, the blended hymn
Is universal Love!
The mighty One
Who sweeps the lyre of Ages, and commands

The praises of ten thousand singing worlds,
Creates the "Stars of Union," and attunes
The lofty harp of Liberty! Shall we,
Proud children of the "storied brave," the free,
Behold our banner, blazoned by the breath
Of glory, sullied by a slave?—our stars
Of Union tossing wildly to and fro
Upon the wave of faction, as they were
But shining shadows, not eternal orbs,
For ever circling through the boundless heaven
Of everlasting purpose? Or shall we
Hear "*dissolution*" sounded, and forbear
To brand the recreant that dared forget
The bond for which our fathers fought and bled?
Cursed be the traitor! doubly, trebly doomed!
The pit of Discord for her victim yawns,
Then back recoiling, shudders to receive
His heart—a fouler and a fiercer hell!

God save the Union!—give the dawning year
This proud baptismal anthem: let its last
Dissolving sigh be—Union undissolved!
New States, with starry emblems, one by one
Come stealing thro' the Future's twilight dim,
Like orbs of evening from the dusky sky;
Enduring evermore with those that tread
Their high, unwearied, and unvarying round

Before the golden gates and battlements
Of Paradise. The harp of Liberty
Shall sound amain till Death himself expire,
Till God has made us free immortally,
And Time is dust upon his broken lyre!
Thrice-raptured moment!—if all-blest, like thee,
Are heaven's bright centuries, how brief will be
Its countless ages of eternity!

The Love-Signal.

"*I love you!* When the twilight deepens, go out and look far away into the sunset, and my spirit will imprint those words for you on the sweet glow of the western heaven."

When the summer day was dying,
Slowly stealing from afar,
Like a pilgrim pale and sighing,
Came the holy vesper-star.
Pure the pearly dew-drops glisten
In the violet's closing eye;
And the drooping lilies listen
As a murmur wanders by—
"Watch, gentle lady: if his love be true,
'T will write its signal on the welkin blue!"

Far along the red horizon
Hang the citadels of air—
Banners of the sun's devising
Wave above them, broad and fair.

Purple, gold, and rich vermilion,
With a gorgeous drapery,
Shroud the dying day's pavilion;
But the lady cannot see,
Where regal sunset paints the glowing skies,
Her lover's signal 'mid their glorious dyes.

Through the green and grassy dingle,
And the tangles of the glade,
Fairy voices seem to mingle
In the leafy colonnade.
From the meadow rich and flowery,
From the valley deep and lone,
From the thicket cool and bowery,
Rings again that silver tone—
"Watch, lovely lady; and his spirit high
Will wave love's signal in the western sky."

Hope her happy heart is filling
With a dream of ecstasy,
Like a rose's bosom thrilling
To the kisses of the bee.
Yet, when faint the star-beam flashes,
And no spirit-sign appears,
Thro' her dark and silken lashes
Shine the softly falling tears;
And twilight, closing o'er the sunset beam,
Brought shades of doubt to mingle in her dream.

Where the mossy fountains sparkle
In their haunted solitude,
And the tiny wavelets darkle
Through the mazes of the wood—
Come a troop of elfin shadows,
With a merry minstrelsy,
O'er the violet-scented meadows
Floating beautiful and free—
"Watch, gentle lady: let thy tearful eyes
Seek heavens fairer than those darkening skies."

Sweet thoughts and wild are flashing
From the fountains of her soul,
As the summer torrent, dashing
Proudly onward, spurns control;
And affection's tide o'ersweeping,
Her bewildered spirit laves,
Till its every fear is sleeping
'Neath the softly chanting waves;
And blissful visions lull her peaceful breast,
For Truth and Trust keep vigil o'er its rest.

Then, from out the lofty dwelling
Of her high and holy thought,
Comes a mystic voice, dispelling
All the gloom her fears have wrought:

Seems it like the raptured swelling
Of an angel's choral chime,
Tales of love and glory telling
Through the lowly vales of Time—
"Sweet Spirit-Bride, lift up thy heart on high:
Thine is a heaven beyond the azure sky!"

By the river's margin shady,
Where the waters kiss the sands,
Gently knelt that lovely lady—
Softly clasped her snowy hands:
All her blissful feelings blended
Into love and trust alone,
Up the azure sky ascended
In a joyous orison—
"My God! my Father! list my grateful prayer—
THY love is heaven, and *his* is written there!"

The Pariah.

"As if she were a part of the wrecks cast out by the waves, and left to corruption and decay, the girl we had followed stood on the river's brink, in the midst of this night-picture, lonely and still, looking down into the water."

DARK lay the sullen scene,
Like a foul plague-spot slowly deepening
In Nature's bosom. Dim and drearily
The din of mingled multitudes came up
From the close, crowded city; yet this spot
Was lonely as the grave; and through the chill
And melancholy waste the river wound,
As a dull earthworm through a sepulchre.
In vaulted vastness rose the storming sky;
And the wild winds, like prisoned birds of prey,
Flew shrieking round the impenetrable gloom
That barred the black horizon; while afar
The thunder's hollow warning crept along
The troubled night-sky; and the stars were hid
Close in their cloudy caverns. Desolate,
A low street, with its crumbling tenements,

Lay by the river's margin: on the brink
The rank grass nodded, poison-weeds held up
Their livid chalices, and baneful leaves
Spotted as with a leprosy. Above
Rose the rude battlements and rereward walls
Of a deserted citadel; and o'er
The turbid waters stretched a ruined bridge,
Like a huge, mouldering skeleton: its lamp
Burned a low, lurid beacon, and the light
Writhed like a serpent on the inky flood
That murmured through the arches.

Cowering
'Mid the dank foliage and slimy stones,
As if in misery to stifle shame,
Crouched the poor Pariah. Betrayed, alone,
Lost utterly, yet strangely beautiful,
As some wan, wildered blossom hanging on
The haggard brow of Ruin! Wondrous fair
The slender fingers clenching hopelessly
At the polluted plants: all wild the cloud
Of raven tresses from the forehead flung:
Sunk the despairing eye, as if to hide,
Within its own deep darkness, from the light's
Insulting sneer. She shuddered when the flash
Of the far lightning fell athwart her brow,
As if it were a demon's kiss; and when
The keen and icy wind struck sharply through

Her white and faded bosom, she would start
With a quick agony, as though the beak
Of a fierce vulture fastened on her heart.
To her the present was a dreary realm,
Peopled with dreams of horror: to the past
She dared not now return; for Sin and Shame,
Two gaunt-eyed sentinels, stood frowningly
Beside the portal; and the future—ah!
Its very thought was insupportable.
She looked a moment to the starless sky—
Its thunder-voice rebuked her for the glance:
She heard the sullen sounding waters dash
On the old dungeon-walls, then fall again
From the rude stone-work, like the troubled stream
Of her affections wasted on a heart
That cast it off with scorn: she saw the tide
Sweep swiftly through the bridge's caverned arch;
And to her gaze it seemed the gate of Death,
Barred by a flaming serpent's hideous coil.
Her heart was broken: not a hope illumed
Its shattered chambers; and existence seemed
One mighty multitude of mocking eyes
And hissing tongues, that stung her sullied soul
To madness. From her unclosed lips arose
The moan of an unspoken prayer: a name
She called as softly as our spirits breathe
Of one the Lord had taken; yet 't was his

Who robbed the soul-shrine of its precious pearl,
To steep it in a cup of bitterness
And unavailing tears. Then upward rose,
O'er the wild, wailing winds, the wilder cry
Of human agony: a white arm broke
The serpent-barrier, then sunk beneath
The blackened archway; and the haunted shore
Was blank and lone!

Thus perished the betrayed!

The tempter, deep betrayer, *murderer*,
Stood, with unblushing front and haughty eye,
Amid the circles of the proud and gay:
Men took his hand, and highborn Beauty bowed
To list his flatteries, unheeding all
A sister's ruined name and broken heart,
And lone, cold slumber where the waters moan
Her requiem. O woman, woman! where
Is thy *true* pride of spirit?—wherefore sleeps
Thy smile of withering scorn—thy lightning-glance
Of honest indignation? Pity weeps,
And soft-eyed Charity; and Honor bows
His noble brow to hide its burning blush;
And blinded Justice, pointing scornfully,
Flings thee her taunting whisper—"Shame, shame,
shame!"
O many-visaged Inconsistency,
Where are thy "principles?" 'T is vain, and worse

Than vain, this hollow prate of "rights" and "wrongs,"
When "wrongs" like these are suffered, while the "right"
And *power* to crush the fiend-destroyer, lies
All unexerted; when the privilege
Is woman's own to do it, and to point
The erring victim to that Blessed One
Who spake to such an one in tones of love—
"*Go, daughter, sin no more!*"

The Homestead.

It was a summer morning. Soft the flame
Of the early sunlight up the zenith came,
Deep tinging, with a golden-crimson hue,
The clouds that floated o'er the welkin blue,
Or veiled the distant mountain. Far and near,
From farm to farm, the call of chanticleer
Rang like a clarion, shrilly sweet and long;
The robin red-breast trilled his matin song,
Hid in the high old maple, while around,
From far, deep-waving grain-fields, gayly sound
The carols of the bob-o-link. The bee
Was out among the blossoms, in his glee,
To rouse them from their dreamings. Gracefully
The west wind waved the weeping willow tree
That drooped above the rivulet, or crept
Amid the branches of the elm that swept
A low-browed homestead. Ruby columbine,
Sweet honeysuckle, and the Indian vine,
Had veiled the rustic portico, and wild
Swayed o'er the casement, and the sunlight smiled
Through the low entrance. 'T was a winsome place,
And like the sunny calm of some sweet face:

You would have thought, in gazing on its rest,
That earth's frail children *sometimes* can be blest.
And yet misfortune found it: see the group
Now gathered at the threshold; o'er them droop
Long, swaying branches, and the loving leaves
Lay their light fingers o'er the heart that grieves,
As if to soothe its sorrows. Agony
Lights up the darkness of the husband's eye:
He stands apart, his bearing calm and proud,
And yet his heart is burning 'neath a cloud
Of dread and misery. The young wife leans
By the old elm tree: 'mid the passing scenes
Her heart is busy; for beside her stands
A lovely child, with snowy, dimpled hands
Clasping her mother's, while within the shade
Her baby brother on the greensward played.
The little maiden mused: a choking swell
Filled her young bosom, and the large tears fell
All silently; then, her slow-lifting eyes
(Their blue depths troubled with a strange surprise)
Sought out her mother's. Tossing back her hair,
Her clear voice melted on the morning air:

"We leave the homestead!—Say, dear mother, why?
Do not the birds and blossoms love us here?
Has any other home a clearer sky,
With brighter stars upon it? Mother dear,

Shall we not sigh *there* for this old elm shade,
Where you and I and brother oft have played?

"We leave the homestead!—Oh! my father, tell,
Why turn we from the fields, and wood-paths dim,
Through which we wended as the Sabbath bell
Called us to worship, with its solemn hymn?
Shall we not sigh to pray where friends have prayed,
Or weep our loved ones in the churchyard laid?"

The haughty bosom of the strong man shook
With an internal tempest, and he took
Her tiny hand within his own. His pride
Was bending, and he earnestly replied—

"Why do we leave it? 'T is a tale too long
And strange to fall upon *thy* heart, my child:
'T would tell of dark misfortunes, pain, and wrong,
And woe, that seemed at times to drive me wild—
To make me doubt the path my fathers trod,
And that the poor man had indeed a God!

"But thou, my Ada, true and gentle bride,
Dost thou remember when thy violet eye
Looked first upon 'Glenoran?' All untried,
It seemed to thee a paradise. Ah! why
Am I myself its serpent and its bane,
To leave on all its bloom a deadly stain?

"Oh! could I only bear this all alone—
The grinding poverty, the lurking sneer,
All the poor debtor's wretchedness—no moan
My soul would utter audibly; but here
My heart of hearts is crushed, my life of life!
They suffer also—child, and babe, and wife.

"We leave the homestead!—Wanderers we go,
From friends, from kindred, and our native land!—
My God! if *I* have merited such woe,
Have *these* deserved it at thy mercy's hand?
Oh! let thy justice all my actions scan,
Yet leave one hope—to die an honest man."

He drooped his head upon his bosom, bowed
With misery; and instantly the proud
Young wife was at his side: soft o'er his brow
Swept her white fingers, and her voice was low:

"Thy soul is dark, beloved: it fears for *us*—
Ah! only trust in God, as I in thee.
Lift up thy stately brow: to see thee thus,
Is worse than all life's agony to me.
Thou couldst have died for us, beloved; but we—
E'en when all hope is lost—will live for thee.

"They cannot separate our souls from thine—
They cannot part us, wheresoe'er we roam;
Or place aught else within the sacred shrine
Where dwell thy wife and children. Loved one, come;
Give me mine only *home* within thy heart—
I'll bear it with me—let us hence depart."

It is the summer twilight. Dark the shades
Are falling through the forest everglades;
The winds are hushed; the lonely whip-poor-will
Sings his wild lullaby upon the hill;
A sighing murmur from the mountain pines
Steals up the valley; and the love-star shines
All brightly in "Glenoran."
Since the morn,
Glad tidings visited those bosoms, torn
With unavailing sorrow; now the "right"
To have a home was granted, and delight
Was blended into orisons. That line
Whose fiat echoes back a law divine,
Was made a statute; and sweet Ada saw
Her loved ones singing, *"Bless the Homestead Law!"*

Leave us not.

Ah! linger yet! a God of love is breathing
New life and passion through the frozen earth,
As once of old the sculptor's love, enwreathing
His marble, woke it into glorious birth;
And dazzling waves of golden light are streaming
From the fire-fountains, where the sun has set;
But fond hearts turn from all that gorgeous gleaming,
To seek thy glance of love—then linger yet!

Oh! leave us not! for Nature's pulses leaping,
Gush into music free, and deep, and strong,
As though the life-drops, in her bosom sleeping,
Burst in the thunder of the cataract's song;
But though her mighty heart is wildly bounding,
Its beatings fall unheeded and forgot;
For while that joyous melody is sounding,
We list for thine—beloved one, leave us not!

Ah! linger yet! the orchard's bloom is glowing
On the far hillside, like a rosy cloud
Lost from the sunset, gloriously bestowing
Its beauty o'er the earth—a radiant shroud!
But from its rose-tints, beautifully blushing,
And crimson shadows, by the breezes met,
We turn away, to mark the first faint flushing
Of health upon thy cheek—then linger yet!

Oh! leave us not! *this* life is bright before thee,
In dawning glory; and the triune gleam
Of Youth, and Hope, and young Ambition, o'er thee
Will wake its music, like the early gleam
Of sunlight on the marble's cold dominion
Of Memnon's mystic statue. 'T is thy lot
To chain a while thy spirit's eagle pinion
Back from its native sky—then leave us not!

Ah! linger yet! though angel arms may woo thee,
And smiles seraphic beckon thee above,
Could that embrace, that smile be sweeter to thee
Than the warm foldings of a mother's love?
And when thy gentle sister softly presses
Her velvet cheek to thine, with tear-drops wet,
Say, could an angel's rapturous caresses
Be fraught with deeper bliss?—then linger yet!

Oh! leave us not! a thousand prayers are blending;
And as they float around the eternal throne,
A whisper up the azure sky is wending:
"O God, so early claim not thou thine own!
Say not so soon, 'For ever be ye parted!'
Leave us the lovely ne'er to be forgot—
The young, the brave, the true, the noble-hearted—
Or, if Thou call'st him to Thee, leave us not!"

April 15th.

"Thou couldst not stay."

Thou 'rt gone, bright spirit! with the summer fading,
Thine earthly form commingles with the clay;
'T was meet, ere autumn's gloom thy sky was shading,
In light and glory thou shouldst pass away.
A darkness, in the woodland-woven shadows,
Seems brooding o'er the beauty of decay;
And far along the fragrant-scented meadows,
A mystic murmur sighs, "Thou couldst not stay!"

Why didst thou leave us? Loveliness still lingers
Where heaven's last roses in the twilight bloom;
And visions, fresh from Faney's fairy fingers,
Come thronging round us 'mid its purple gloom.
When music on the breath of eve is stealing,
As Nature lifts her mighty heart on high,
While up to God her vesper-hymn is pealing,
And life is worship—wherefore didst thou die?

Thou 'rt gone, proud spirit! cold and restless, turning
From all life promised in this world below;
To feel no more its "fitful fever" burning—
Its flaming billows tossing to and fro.
No more, with chains of clay enwreathing round thee,
To struggle onward through its weary day;
The hand of God from bondage hath unbound thee—
He gave thee freedom, and "Thou couldst not stay."

Yet why desert us? though by tempest driven,
Far drifting onward, like a thunder-cloud;
Though faint at times, by passion's lightning riven,
Was not thy spirit in its conquests proud?
And oh! when "might and right" so wildly round thee
Were mingled in a contest fierce and high,
When Victory in the battle almost crowned thee,
And life was triumph—wherefore didst thou die?

Thou 'rt gone, sweet spirit! fond affections, twining
In votive wreaths around thy heart and brow,
But mock the amaranthine garlands shining
In fadeless lustre o'er their beauty now;
Yet when, with time, tint after tint is waning,
And Memory's temple shrines them in decay,
No stranger love, the tender gloom profaning,
Shall steal the tokens, though "Thou couldst not stay."

Why didst thou leave us? Is thy home in heaven
As lovely as the valley of thy birth?
And is the love by angel bosoms given
As deep, as fervid, as the loves of earth?
Hadst thou no wish, when fading health was fleeting,
To bear us with thee to thy native sky?
Ah! then, when youth with hope and joy was meeting,
And life a love-dream—wherefore didst thou die?

September 15th.

Only Love Me.

Oh! love me, only love me!
For this wayward heart of mine
Would forget the heaven above me,
Were it not that it is *thine!*
Would reject the strong protection
Which its angel bands display,
For the fragile first affection
Of an erring child of clay.
Then, should life be sorrow-shrouded,
And its billows passion-whirled,
Let *thy* brow be still unclouded,
And I shall not fear the world!

How my restless spirit flutters
In its prison-house of clay!
And every song it utters
Seems existence wrung away,

By chains of earth compelling
On the forward march of life,
Till my throbbing heart is swelling,
And it sickens in the strife.
But now thy love hath bound me,
And it confidence shall give:
Oh! clasp its shield around me,
And I shall not fear to live!

When this fragile life is fading,
And its evanescent gleam
Sinks in shadow all-pervading,
Oh! be thou its latest dream!
When tumultuous thoughts, revolving,
Steal away the power to speak,
Let thy breath of flame, dissolving
On my swiftly-paling cheek,
And thy dewy kisses, pressing
On my dim and closing eye,
Be thy deathless love confessing—
And I shall not fear to die!

The Motherless.

She was a little wanderer. One morn,
Her bright young mother passed away to heaven,
As some clear-shining, silver wreath of mist
Floats from the mountain summit; leaving yet,
To linger on the earth, one pearly drop
From its white bosom. Such was this fair child—
A gleeful creature, all too young to weep
This hiding of a mother's love, or feel
That life's best blessing had been torn away.
  Her soul was pure and yielding as the air
Of summer morning, and as full of light;
Her eye of azure mirrored back the sky
From which its hue descended; and her brow—
The broad, white brow of childhood—gleamed amid
Its curls, as oft at twilight's holy hour
Some seraph's snowy pinion penetrates
A cloud of golden shadows. When her voice
Its lisping intonations first essayed,

The timid words came slowly from her lip,
As one by one the softly-singing bees
Steal from the red rose-petals, laden deep
With honeyed melody and odorous dew.
She seemed the spirit of a reckless joy—
The very soul of smiles—as far within
The forest-aisles she whiled the summer day
With songs to faun and fairy, sending back
The sweet, low-gushing laughter of the brook,
And carol of the birdling. Softly there
She clasped her tiny hands, and smiled to hear
The west winds whisper—shouted wild to see
The sunshine chase the shadows o'er the green
And grassy hillside—pausing suddenly
As the young blue-bird rose aloft, to dip
His plumage in the sky; or left the search
For hidden violets, to listen when
The lark went up to learn his matin-hymn
From angels singing in the crimson clouds.
As some wild blossom of the woodland shade,
She sprang to life and beauty—lonely all,
Yet lovely in her loneliness. For none
Came kindly, gently round the stranger-child
To guide, or love her—*she was not their own.*
No fond, proud mother smoothed with snowy hand
Her curls of darkening gold; or marked the light
That deepened in her eye: her music-tones

Unheeded fell; and when at eve she crept
Into her little pallet, 't was to dream
Of birds, and bees, and smiling summer skies,
But not of home or friends; for none had taught
The motherless to *pray*, or ask her God
To make her home in heaven!

Years passed away:
Her sunny locks held deeper shades, her heart
More glowing pulses, and upon her cheek
The changeful crimson came and fled, as flits
The rich Aurora of the Northern Pole.
A heaven of starlit darkness slept within
Her large, mysterious eyes; and yet their gaze
Was mournful to the soul, as though above
A fount of unshed tears, the spirit sang
Its soft, wild miserere. Then her soul
Was like a deep and stainless wave; and when
She gazed far up the sky's transparent blue,
Great thoughts of immortality and God
Came wafting down upon that wave—a snow
Of blossoms from the overladen boughs
That bloom in Eden.

Summers came and fled:
She wandered forth upon the busy world,
Lonely, yet lovely as the star that floats
On the far billow, with no hand to guide
Her wayward course, save His alone who rules

The dim, night-shadowed waters. As she passed
Upon her journey o'er the treacherous sea
Of Life, a nameless fear, a terror vague,
Yet strangely palpable, grew dark around
Her startled heart; and the corroding want
Of home affections coldly gnawed within.
That "knowledge of the world" which comes to all,
Yet soonest to the homeless, slowly dawned
Upon her shrinking senses: suddenly
Strange thoughts of ill and dread—she knew not why
Or wherefore—flashed across her darkened soul,
As from the thunder-cloud yet hid beneath
The far horizon's verge, we catch the glare
Of lightning, knowing not from whence it comes.
A moment her dilating eye would strain
To pierce this mist of madness, and then shrink,
As round, above, beside her in the gloom
Pale spectres crowded, striving still to hide,
Beneath the lurid livery of woe,
The branded blazonry of sin and shame!
Above the death of Hope and Trust she bowed
And wept, and deemed her fire-wrung brain had burst
In that fierce rush of tears!
O God! that thou
In mercy hadst allowed that fearful cup,
Whose draught is "power," yet bitterness, to pass
Away from that young spirit! In the hour

Of trial and temptation be THOU near,
That she may learn to hope in Thee alone,
The Mighty, and to trust the Merciful.
Teach her to soar *above* the callous world,
And, like the sunset when it seeks to gild
Earth's gloomy valleys, and is there denied
An entrance, rises to the mountain-cloud,
And dies away at last amid the glow
Of heaven's glories!

Notes from a Spirit-Lyre.

"My soul sends forth to thee its fond, wild greeting,
With lip to lip, while pulse to pulse is beating,
And heart to heart."

Loved one, wake! the dawn is waving banners in the eastern sky;
Morn the cheek of Heaven is laving with a blush of softest dye;
From the gorgeous sunlight sweeping onward with resistless might,
Speed away the shadows sleeping on the purple clouds of Night.
Wake! a spirit-kiss is pressing on thy half-closed, dreamy eye,
All its passion deep confessing: let it bid thy slumbers fly:
Bow thy haughty spirit lowly, falter forth its music-prayer,
And amid its whispers holy, kindred hearts shall mingle there!

Loved one, rest! the noon is glowing brightly over flood and fell:
Hushed and low the stream is flowing, wending through the woodland dell:
On its banks the enamored blossom, thrilling with a soft delight,
Folds the wild bee to its bosom, blushing in its dream so bright.
Rest! a spirit's viewless winglet lightly fans thy burning brow,
Sweeping back each wavy ringlet bending o'er thy beauty now:
Thus to charm "life's fitful fever" with a spell of fairy glee,
Loving and beloved for ever, oft my spirit visits thee.

Loved one! Night's dark lash is drooping o'er the soft blue eye of Day:
Forms of light, from Heaven stooping, fold their shining wings to pray:
Sunset lingers on the mountain, shadows sleep far down the glen,
And a glory crowns the fountain with a rainbow diadem.
List! a tone of tender greeting murmurs through the dewy wood;
Wild and wingéd thoughts are meeting in that haunted solitude:
'T is a glorious reünion, formed of visions glad and free—
A delicious heart-communion, for my spirit meets with thee!

Loved one, come! the stars are paling in the moon's resplendent beam;
Silver-tinted mists are veiling hill and valley, rock and stream;
Fade the sunset's glowing roses from the mountain's purple crest;
Dark the cloud of eve reposes, floating up the sombre west.
Come! my heart with thine would wander down the vistas of the Past,
Turning once again to ponder on the joys too bright to last:
Leave we then this weary, burning march of life that Time has brought,
To sit beneath the oft-returning shadow of some olden thought.

Loved one! midnight's chime is pealing, telling the departed hours,
Like to fairy music stealing 'mid the dewy, dreaming flowers:
Soft the scented breeze is swelling with the voices of the skies—
Mystic tones that have their dwelling in a far-off Paradise.
List! a voice with thine is breathing vows of music like thine own:
Holy hopes like incense wreathing, upward far to Mercy's throne;
Thoughts that seek their native heaven, rising on the star-beam's light;
Spirit-harps, by angels given, strike the anthem of the Night!

Loved one, sleep! the moon is waning, and thy spirit is afar
In a land of shadows reigning—radiant realm of flower and star!
Swifter than the quivering streamer of the Borealis light
Speed thy visions, blissful dreamer, on the rushing winds of Night.
Sleep! a spirit-lyre is ringing—till the dusky shades depart:
Sleep! a spirit-voice is singing—it has floated round thy heart;
And while a vision's gentle semblance, and a power to it was given,
Stole within thy loved remembrance, dreaming that it entered heaven!

Unwritten Music.

Dost thou not hear it? 'T is upon the breeze,
And by the brookside, in the forest aisles,
And far away where cloud and sunshine meet
In the deep azure sky. The symphonies
Of Spring are gushing fervently and free,
As early orisons from the pure hearts
And lips of childhood. From the valley green,
Where wave the slender willows, upward steals
The low, clear tinkling of the rivulet,
As though it mocked the roving zephyr's search
For its sweet hiding-place. The bird and bee
Sing to the blossoms, and their minstrelsy
Calls forth the queenly rose, as erst the lay
Of bard was wont to herald the approach
Of beauty to the tournament. On high
The sky-lark bathes his bosom in the cloud,
And every tiny drop within it thrills

To his glad melody, as thrill the hearts
Of some vast multitude of listeners
When Sweden's song-bird sings.

Around the eaves
Flits the young blue-bird, and the little wren,
With its low, piping note; the humming-bird,
Bright as a flying rainbow; while afar,
From the deep everglade, comes up the call
Of sweet-voiced dwellers in the solitude.
Where the dark cedar flings its mossy boughs
O'er the white-crested dogwood trees, is heard
The winding of the locust's tiny horn;
While from the beechen grove the katydid
Sends forth her merry challenge. At the morn
The gay grasshopper, with his fairy fife,
Sounds a shrill *reveillé;* and swift at eve
The elves come trooping to the beetle's drum:
Then, when the thunder, with its organ-swell,
Peals through the dome of heaven, how softly fall
The footsteps of the rain, like to a band
Of gentle worshippers slow entering
The temple of the Lord.

Oh! what a world
Of heaven-descended music lies around
Our daily pathway! in the morning air,
The noontide glory, and the dewy fall
Of dusky twilight—in the carollings

Of bird and breeze, the murmur of the leaves,
And the low-gliding streamlet. Can we note
Their many-braided melodies? or give again
Their spells of song to thousands? None, not one;
And yet the poorest slave may revel in
This music, written by the hand of God.

Alone!

List! my soul, as the night-wind drear
Wails for the dead leaves, pale and sere,
On the bleak earth strown;
Sighing and shuddering, faint and cold,
As the maniac-miser's cry for gold,
It shrieks and sobs o'er the midnight wold—
Alone! alone!

Look! where the vagrant wild-fire's light,
Flitting away through the shadowy night,
O'er the grave is thrown;
A lurid gloom in the dismal haze,
Now light, now lost to the dreamer's gaze,
It fades—it dies in the 'wildered maze—
Alone! alone!

Hist! from the depths of the haunted well
Rises a signal dread and fell:
At the sullen moan,

The crumbling walls o'er the waters shake;
And the spotted toad, and the slimy snake,
In their beds of lichen quail and quake—
Alone! alone!

Far to the verge of a lonely glen,
By the fox's lair, and the ban-wolf's den,
Sweeps the wizard tone:
It summons the ghoul from his charnel-bed,
Withered, and gibbering, and demon-fed,
To the path of doom—(and away he's sped,)
Alone! alone!

Tu-whit! tu-whoo! 'Twas the mousing owl,
Keeping his watch by an altar foul,
On the Druid-stone:
He hides from the prowling vampire-brood,
Deep in the gloom of the mystic wood,
And cowers down in the solitude—
Alone! alone!

Croak! croak! 'Twas the raven's cry:
'Mid the bough of hemlock dank and high,
His fiend-eye shone.
To the night-hag hid in the blasted tree,
As lone, as weird, and as fierce as he,
Came the chant of his mocking prophecy—
Alone! alone!

Hark! what a writhing, stifling sound
Slowly creeps from the murderers' mound,
Like a victim's groan:
Too dread to rise on the wind's wild swell,
Deep through the cypress-shadowed dell
Echoes the murmur hoarse and fell—
Alone! alone!

Up! my soul, from this charnel gloom,
Which binds thee down to a living tomb
With an iron zone:
Up! my soul, on the homeless tide
Of a dark existence, wild and wide,
To doom and destiny proudly ride
Alone! alone!

What seekest Thou?

"It is," says an old writer, "the natural propensity of man to hunt *something*."

Youth! that on the verge of life
Pausest, ere the battle strife
Closes round thee, all thy soul
Panting for its destined goal;
While thy passions thrill and glow
Like arrows in a bended bow—
Tensioned for the conflict now,
'Mid its din what seekest thou?
The bold eye flashed across the battle-plain,
And centred on Ambition's lofty fane.

Maiden! with thy dreamy eye
Full of sleeping witchery;
Fold on fold of beauties warm
Sweep around thy graceful form:
Hopes and feelings bright and blest,
Thrilling in a sweet unrest,

Bring the blush from heart to brow—
In *this* world, what seekest thou?
The dark eye drooped until its lashes swept
Her changing cheek: the maiden loved, and wept.

Mourner! by a fount of tears
Murmuring of by-gone years,
Tracing faded lips and eyes
By thy moonlight memories;
In their cold and pallid gray
Peering for one golden ray,
What pale shadow claims thy vow?
Through the gloom what seekest thou?
The fixed eye wavered not: in death, its last
Dull gaze was centred on the shadowy Past.

Poet! by the midnight chime
Numbering the sands of Time;
In the dawning poring o'er
Nature's tomes of hidden lore;
Grasping, by thy mystic art,
At the pulses of her heart,
In its thunder-throbbings now
Linked with thine—what seekest thou?
The deep eyes lifted, and their burning glow
Was turned within—he sought himself to know.

Mother! kneeling at the shrine
Of a Majesty divine,
In thy meek, confiding faith,
Rising on devotion's breath;
On thy heart a shadow lies,
Blessing while it beautifies:
Wherefore doth thy spirit bow
Now at eve? What seekest thou?
The soft eyes trembled, first to heaven; then where
Lay the low couch—her angel was not there!

Mortal! bearing on the weight
Portioned by relentless fate;
Dusty with life's travel-soil,
Weary with its grief and toil;
Thirsting in thy fevered prime
For the old man's evening-time;
What is thy pursuit? and how
Is it found? What seekest thou?
The quailing eye, bent downward in distrust,
Answered unconsciously, "Ah! naught but dust!"

Weep not.

Oh! chide not, if cold on my heart's dewy slumber,
Like the frost on the blossom, unkissed by the bee,
There fell a chill blighting; and ere it could number
Its love-kindled pulses, or give them to *thee*,
It was shut in an ice-shrine where sympathies sever,
Where the glow of the sunbeam can penetrate never,
And the sweet buds of feeling lie frozen for ever,
In snow-shrouded beauty;—oh! weep not for me.

Oh! mourn not if sorrow, my spirit corroding,
Has cankered the harp-string, till all melody
Is fraught with an echo of fearful foreboding—
A low, hollow murmur of evil to be:
Its pæan is changed to a wild miserere,
Like that of the night-wind when, 'wildered and weary,
It wails through a sepulchre wasted and dreary,
And dies 'mid the ruins;—yet weep not for me.

Oh! blame not, if dark on my soul's snowy pinion
The earth-stain and fetter a while you may see;
For God shall release it from this world's dominion,
And swift it shall soar to him, spotless and free.
Then, flushed with a splendor in glory excelling
The loftiest dreams of this earth-bounded dwelling,
It shall waft on the anthems triumphantly swelling
Through Day's azure arches;—then weep not for me.

Oh! weep not, if over my life's sunny morning
A mystical presage of Fortune's decree—
A phantom of gloom with a whisper of warning—
Looms up from the clouds of a dark destiny.
Though shadows of Fate o'er my bright sky are creeping,
I heed not their progress, if slow or swift-sweeping;
For the green turf is light where my loved ones are sleeping—
Our home is in heaven;—oh! weep not for me.

The Apollo Belvidere.

[Italian legends tell us of a young girl, a foreigner, gifted and strangely beautiful, who died for love of this magnificent idea of manly beauty, expressed in stone.]

Eve o'er the Eternal City! Vesper-time,
With its empurpled heaven and mellow chime
Of silver-sounding bells. Its glory ran
Through the proud chambers of the Vatican
Most gorgeously; illumining the shrine
Of sage and hero, and the forms divine
That glowed along the lofty marble hall,
Or shone from niche or stately pedestal:
Far richer these than haughty halls which held
Of yore the grandly gathered gods of Eld.
Deep beauty kindled the majestic scene;
And a sweet stillness, solemn and serene,
Reigned o'er its loveliness. The Belvidere

Rose like a vision, when some raptured seer
Views a descended angel; and there knelt
A worshipper before it—one who felt,
If the whole Universe to her were given,
She still would linger there, and call it heaven!
The gale's rose-odors, and the harp's wild strain,
Stole through the portals of that antique fane:
A lordly pageant to the feast swept on
With its exulting music. Parian-stone,
She heard them not: passed all unheeded by
That blaze of pomp, that din of revelry.
A splendor o'er the god and maiden fell,
Caught from the ruby shadows. Like a spell,
It lit one moment with its crimson dye
Her pearly cheek's white-rose transparency;
And, when it met her jewel-braided hair,
Still lingered, flashing like a halo there;
Till 'neath her snowy floating veil it seemed
An angel's sun-wrought diadem up-streamed!
Like dewy music-falls upon the air
Was that sweet presence: so divinely fair
The sculptured bosom, over which there rolled
A flood of tresses—darkly shaded gold
And glowing amber; and so full of pride
The regal mien, meet for a seraph's bride.
As if from godlike beauty hers had caught
All the proud grandeur of its lofty thought

In a deep vision, that uplifted face
Held nobler beauties than of earthly race,
And like the light which o'er the Peri shone
When her lost Paradise again was won.
The dark fringe lifted from her eye: its beam
Was wildly brilliant as the Sybil's dream
Of inspiration: softly o'er her breast
Her thin, white fingers suddenly were pressed:
She gazed upon the statue. Through the veil
Of snow, a swift blush tinged the forehead pale:
A dewy dimness stole upon her eye,
Softening its diamond lustre dreamily—
The misty veil which passion's tenderness
Flings o'er the burning deeps of its excess;—
And her lips parted with a quivering thrill,
Like pale rose-petals which the night-dews fill.
The tones half murmured, wavering at first,
Came deepening, as if upon her burst
A radiant vision of that viewless world
Where her white wing, already half unfurled,
Must soar; and kindled with its passion-power
The wild swan-music of her dying-hour:—

"Sun-Spirit! the star-read Chaldean
Would bow to thy mysterious spell:
My life-star in the empyrean—
Wild passion's burning oracle!

I've loved thee unto death, alas!
And yet I feel not death's alarms;
But like a singing Peri pass
Into the Eden of thine arms—
There, there to dwell eternally,
Bright crowned with immortality!

"Along life's tangled, weary way
I shall not wander forth alone,
Nor pour upon a child of clay
This high heart's love—to such unknown;
Nor would I woo thee downward, where
No Eden love-bloom ever grew—
I would not wed thee here, for *there*
Shall I not be immortal, too?
In regal state, thine angel-bride;
And I, as *thou*, be deified?

"Lord of the Lyre! my pilgrim thought
This path of life has only trod
To bow before—it knows not what—
Like Athens to her "unknown God!"
Yet through the long, lone, voiceless hours
I wandered on, from all apart,
And tore away the dew-bright flowers
That clustered in my deep young heart,
To fling their garlands on thy shrine—
Then sleep, and dream that thou wert mine!

"*Mine!* 'Mid the gorgeous isles of cloud
Thy spirit waited joyously,
To fold me in its radiant shroud
Of glorious Divinity!
And I on thy strong bosom lay
All softly as the southern breeze
That sinks at golden fall of day
Upon the white, proud-heaving seas;
While our rapt spirits, bright and free,
Mingled in passion's purity!

"I sat beneath thy pluméd wing,
While from it, in that blissful hour,
An Eden-glory glittering
Fell round me in a jewel-shower.
I bowed beneath thy soft caress—
The glow of those impassioned eyes,
Whose wakened glances' rich excess
Could only burn in Paradise;
And, like the bird of fabled fame,
Dissolve in splendor and in flame!

"Thy language, steeped in passion's lore,
Flowed like the deep and burning lay
In which archangels wildly pour
Their rapt, adoring souls away;

And thou didst look upon the lone,
Star-crested seraphs far above,
And sigh to think they had not known
The bliss that dwells in *woman's love;*
Then smile to find my earnest eye
Fixed on thine own adoringly!

Far round us the eternal stars
Swept through the purple shades of space,
Like shapes of light on fiery cars,
Rejoicing in their flaming race!
But swift as waning summer night
To love's first dream of ecstasy,
Like one deep throb of wild delight
Sped that entranced Eternity!
I sink, I waver—ah! I'm free!
Bright Spirit-Love, I come to thee!"

All hushed; yet a faint sweetness lingers still,
Like the last echo of the wind-harp's thrill,
Which seemed to deepen to a pæan, blent,
And waving o'er the crystal firmament:
Far on the bosom of the stainless sky
Was seen a gleam of wings; triumphantly,
Through the rose-shadows of declining day,
Her path star-jewelled o'er the "solar way,"
Young Love's bright martyr, panting for the skies,
Sought the pearl portals of her Paradise.

Chains of Clay.

Calm thy restless wing, proud spirit;
Still thy wildly throbbing heart;
Cease to dream thou dost inherit
Freedom's high, immortal part:
Morn, that shone so bright upon thee,
Fades beneath a hidden spell;
Strong captivity hath won thee,
Spirit! to thy prison-cell:
Dark and gloomy walls surround thee,
Closing out the promised day,
And a mighty arm hath bound thee
In the clankless chains of clay!

Light hath shown thy spirit-bridal
All a false and maddening mock;
Fate hath doomed thy bosom's idol
To the vulture and the rock.

Chill around thee, dim and slowly,
Creeps a strange and deadly fear;
Whispers dread and sounds unholy
Steal upon thy shrinking ear.
Steeped in poison, coldly paining,
Wasting heart and life away,
Clasping close and deeply staining,
Lie thy fearful chains of clay!

Bow thy haughty heart to mingle
With the idlers of the world;
Crush "EXCELSIOR," the single
Star within its deeps impearled.
Freeze thy fire-winged emulation
Down to listless apathy:
Why should thought's rapt adoration
Thrill thy soul to ecstasy?
Why shouldst *thou* thus strive to number
Treasures hid from dull decay?
Others round thee calmly slumber
'Neath their galling chains of clay.

Thou wouldst sweep an angel-lyre,
Tuned to melodies sublime,
Writing with immortal fire
On the sinking sands of Time.

Thou wouldst ask the mighty Giver
What the souls He gave us are—
Following on the dream for ever,
Up through many a distant star.
Strive no longer, vainly breasting
Toils and terrors in thy way—
Smile like other slaves when resting
'Neath their clankless chains of clay.

Thou wouldst fathom life, deep tracing
Sources utterly unknown—
Gaining no relief, but placing
Stronger fetters round thine own.
Thou wouldst pierce the dark hereafter,
Where the disembodied soul
Flies when spirit-pinions waft her
To the far eternal goal.
Strong, and proud, and self-depending,
Thou wouldst seek the "perfect day,"
With a mortal's power rending
Off thy mortal chains of clay.

Though upon thee now are falling
Dungeon echoes drearily,
One above is softly calling—
"Weary spirit, trust in me!

Lift thine eye so wan and faded,
  Bounded by its earthly scope;
Lone, imprisoned, and degraded,
  Wait in patience—wait in hope!"
Rest thee, then! there is a glorious,
  God-appointed, coming day,
When, o'er Life and Death victorious,
  Thou shalt burst these chains of clay.

The Man of the Age.

"If the days of my usefulness be indeed past, I desire not to linger an impotent spectator of the oft-scanned field of life."—*Henry Clay.*

Columbia's freedom is the glorious shade
Cast from the genius of her *Washington;*
Triumphant now in heaven, as light is named
The shadow of Jehovah. Full within
That radiant shadow, towers the giant mind
Of *Clay.* He stands upon a narrow shore,
The Present, graving on its shifting sands
His iron impress: close behind him lies
The vistaed Past, deep blazoned with his name;
And far before him, stretching limitless,
The unknown Ocean of the Afterward.
He gazes on it: at his feet are strewn
The trophies of his bloodless victories;
Around him press a mighty multitude
Of anxious hearts, that count the throbs of Time,
And list the stealthy and unearthly tread

That heralds the destroyer; while afar,
Upon yon snowy cloud-cliff, Liberty,
With troops of angels, waits to give the soul
Its apotheosis.

It is a scene,
A picture, where the gathered world may gaze,
And gazing, wonder. When his final knell
Shall pass that kneeling, waiting multitude,
Like some dread planet's transit o'er the sun,
The wail of thronging millions shall go up
To Heaven, as though its loving mercy-smile
Had passed away for ever. Then shall they
Who loved, who blessed him on the shore of Time
Revere him as a shining memory;
Remembrance paint him, on the viewless air,
As erst amid the rage-inspired waves
Of popular commotion he has stood
Fixed, and attracting all unto himself—
Calm centre of the whirlpool; when his glance
Of indignation scanned the holds of Wrong
Till they dissolved away, e'en as the proud
Ice-palace of the Czar, when oped the sun
His steady, silent eye. Or as at times
Fanaticism, like the geyser, threw
Aloft its boiling and bewildering spray,
Its hot impurities of slime and rock,
He soared above it, like the summer-cloud

Deep-freighted with fertility: his thoughts
Came rolling, crowding to the brink, and broke
In the "live thunder" of his eloquence,
Which sped the rapid bolts of argument,
And drove them home with lightning! And when, through
That long, long night of fear, was heard the deep,
Vague moaning of a nation's dark unrest,—
The age's troubled dream, Disunion, lay
Crouched like a hydra-headed incubus
Upon our country's bosom—pressing down,
With gory fangs, the throbbing of her heart,—
Star of the morning, rose the "*Compromise*,"
As a blue break of beauty in the sky:
Peace entered, and the dream of horror passed.
Then "Intervention" stood upon our shores—
A bright Semele, falsely beautiful,
Robed in the graces of seductive art,
And vaunting of her strength; yet, when embraced
By the true glories of that Jove-like mind,
Felt her own weakness, and with terror fell
To blackened ashes!

Heart of the mighty! it is meet that thou
Shouldst wish to pass away; for Death to thee
Is but the conquered—thou his conqueror.
Bright emanation from the Infinite,
Soul of the star-beam, couldst *thou* fear to die?

Nay—forth alone upon the shoreless sea
Of the Hereafter thou shalt launch thy barque,
With that strong faith which blest the lofty heart
Of the world-finder in the days of yore;
With that high trust which elevates the soul
Of the star-seeker, watching through the night
For a new sphere amid the mystic deeps
Of far Infinitude! Then all the world
In one great memory shall point to thee
As incarnation of the mighty truth—
"Man is immortal till his work be done!"

"Amelia."

Winds! upon your mystic flight,
  Laden with the smile and tear,
Stay your pinions, soft and light,
  O'er a loved one on her bier.
Breathe upon her snowy brow,
  Kiss the lashes folded deep
Over living splendors now
  Curtained in eternal sleep.

Waters! on your hidden path
  Wending to the southern main,
Lull the murmurs of your wrath
  To a gentle, sighing strain;
Faintly let your music-flow,
  Rolling with the restless tide,
Wail the heart that slumbers low
  By the lonely river-side.

Blossoms! brightening the way
Of the lovely to the tomb,
Fair as you, this child of clay
Faded ere your early bloom.
Softly droop upon her breast;
Lightly let your leaflets wave
O'er the placid, dreamless rest
Of the gifted in her grave.

Clouds! that in your shining sweep
Up the azure zenith roll,
And with crystal shadows keep
Veiled the swift-ascending soul;
Ope the folds, that we of earth
May, ere every link be riven,
Catch one beam of parting worth
Ere it pass the gates of heaven.

Stars! upon your burning march,—
Crested armaments of light,
Passing the triumphal arch,
And the purple plains of Night!
Saw ye in your flaming race
Aught of her who loved you here?
Lingered she in angel grace
Over any golden sphere?

Spirits! on that radiant road
Leading up the jewelled skies
To the mercy-seat of God,
Wreathed with immortalities;
Let your pinions upward roam—
Bear her to the blissful rest;
Waiting in her spirit's home,
'Mid the mansions of the blest.

Children of the "Wreath and Lyre!"
Where, upon life's dizzy steep,
Burns the spirit's quenchless fire,
Where its echoes never sleep;
Tidings of her triumph tell
To the earth, and sea, and sky;
Like an organ's gathering swell,
Sing of one "*not born to die!*"

The "Long Ago."

You are far away, my Lida,
And the April breezes blow
O'er the hills of "Allaquida,"
Where we wandered long ago
When the sunny hours of childhood
Swept like singing streams along,
And the valley and the wildwood
Echoed to our merry song;
When we used to run bright races
With the sunshine on the hill:—
O'er those old familiar places
Does the sunbeam linger still?

Do you ever think, *ma mignonne*,
Of that pleasant long ago,
Flitting like a fairy's pinion,
With its evanescent glow?

When our little hearts kept beating
Still a loving music-chime,
Like two tiny wavelets meeting
In some happy Eden-clime?
And the thrill of gushing gladness,
Springing up we knew not how,
Never tinged with aught of sadness,
Does it thrill your bosom now?

Do you ever wander, sister,
By that lonely, bushy bank,
Where the crimson lilies cluster
'Mid the rushes long and dank?
Where, whene'er we went a-nutting,
We would rest at eventide,
On the rocky ledges jutting
From the bosky dingle-side?
Robins built beneath the arches;
And a blue-bird, in a bough
Of the overhanging larches:—
Do you ever hear them now?

Canst recall the legends olden
Of that shadow-haunted dell,
Where the sunlight, green and golden,
Most fantastically fell?

And the range of "mossy mountains,"
Where sweet "Allaquida's bower"
Rose beside the forest-fountains,
'Neath a jewel-dropping shower
Of the hazel's pearly tassels,
And the maple's ruby sheen,
Which the winds, her fairy vassals,
Poured around the "Indian Queen."

Then the jolly rides at morning,
On the pony sleek and old;
Every danger proudly scorning
On the upland bleak and bold;
And the search for silver fishes,
Wading in the crystal pool,
(Just the spot to suit our wishes,)
At the noontide clear and cool.
How the tiny billows tinkled
O'er the pebbles and the net;
And your little white feet twinkled,—
Oh! I think I see them yet!

Yes, I see you often, Lida,
As you used to look when we
Dwelt at "bonnie Allaquida,"
With the bird, and breeze, and bee.

Laughing eyes of limpid azure,
And the snowy baby-brow
Peeping from the gold embrasure
Of its curls,—I see it now!
Then I wish that God had laid us
Down to slumber in the wild;
For His love would *then* have made us
Each His little angel-child!

The Eloquence of Ruins.

High on a desert, desolated plain
In the far Orient, a stately band
Of giant columns rise. Above the sleep
Of devastated cities, mouldering,
Yet haughtily, they stand; grim sentinels,
Calling the watches of a vanished race,
And guarding still from Ruin's felt-shod tread,
The mutilated chronicles of Eld.

Heavy with melodies all vast and vague,
Lifts up a solemn voice where ages lie
Entombed with empires, in the crumbled pride
Of old Byzantium. Dark Egypt's lore
Lies in her catacombs; her histories
In fallen temples; and her pyramids,
Like ponderous old tomes upon the sands,
Teem with the hidden records of the Past.
Amid their gloomy mysteries, the Sphinx,
A gaunt-eyed oracle, essays to speak;

And the weird whisper of her stony lip
Sounds o'er the tumult of the rushing years.
Greece! how her shattered domes reverberate
The thunders of a thousand gods, that dwelt
On Ida and Olympus! Porticoes
That droop above their portals, like a brow
Of meditative marble over eyes
Dim with the haze of revery, still speak
Of ancient sages; and her pillars tell
Of heroes that have sought the Lethean wave,
And shores of Asphodel. Then, rising where
The yellow Tiber flows, some stately shaft,
Like a proud Roman noble in the halls
Of the great Forum, stands—the orator
Of nations gone to dust. The obelisk,
Girt with resistance, gladiator-like,
From his arena challenges a host
Of stealthy-footed centuries!
The lone,
Dark circle of the Druid, with its stones
Rugged and nameless, has a monotone
Wild as the runes of Sagas at the shrine
Of Thor and Odin. Slow and silently
The pallid moonlight creeps along the walls
Where midnight cowers 'neath a dusky veil,
In the old abbey shadow. Timidly
It creepeth up, to list the tales they tell

Of beauty and of valor, laid to sleep
In the low, vaulted chancel. Ivy-crowned,
And crumbling to decay, how loftily
Rise the old castle towers! Its corridors
Resound with elfin echoes as the bell,
Wind-rocked upon its turret, sends a knell
From cornice to cavazion. The owl,
A dim-eyed warder, watches in his tower;
And zephyr, like a wandering troubadour,
Sports on the ruined battlement, and sings
To broken bastion, shattered oriel,
And fallen architrave.

The western wild
Spreads out before us, and her voice of might
Shakes the old wilderness. Alone it swells,
Where tropic bloom and gray corrosion strive
To crush the deep and restless mutterings
Of hoary-headed ages. Dim and strange,
The priest, the vestal, and the dark cazique,
Rise on the Teocallis; and below
Flit the swart shadows of the nameless tribes
That peopled Iximaya. Ruins all—
Yet mighty in their eloquence!

But oh!
Deeper, and wilder, more melodious far,
The voice of melancholy, wailing o'er
A desolated homestead! *That* awakes

Its echo in the memory: it brings
(Alas! that it should be but memory)
The carol of the robin, and the hum
Of the returning bee—the winds at eve,
Aud the low, bell-like tinkle of the brook
That rippled round the garden. Then we see
The great elm-shadow, with the threshold stone
That garnered up the sunshine; and the vine
That crept around the colonnade, and bloomed,
Close-clinging as a love unchangeable.
And then, perchance, we feel the blesséd light
Of our sweet mother's smile—the holy breath
Of a good father's benison. We think
Of the white marbles where their hearts are laid
Down to a dreamless slumbering;—ah! *then*
Rush the thick, blinding tears, and we can see
No more!

The Iron Horse.

From the caverns of Art, in the hills of the North,
Sprang a proud-crested charger exultingly forth.
By the spirit of steam was his breathing up-borne;
From the strong forest-giants his sinews were torn;
And the gnomes of the mine shouted loud in their ire
O'er his iron-bound bosom and pulses of fire!

Away! on his mission of power and pride,
As springs the bold eagle the tempest to ride;
Or swift as the bolts of the far-flashing levin,
When the storm is abroad on the dark-rolling heaven;
Down, down on the nations the thunderer came,
With his cloud-breathing nostrils, and frontlet of flame!

Through the deep-crowded life of the populous mart,
The thick, throbbing pulse of the great city's heart,
Where a swarming humanity wavers and reels,
All weary with urging life's fate-driven wheels;
Like a black-bannered monarch from victory won,
The fierce-plunging charger dashed haughtily on.

As a spirit of doom by the solitude lone,
Where Death sits aloft on his grave-girdled throne;
Where slumbers a silent and shadowy throng,
The dark-bosomed steed came careering along;
And his neigh to the midnight was chillingly dread,
Like the wild-swelling trumpet that rouses the dead.

Where the foam-crested waves in magnificence toss,
The blue ocean armies came sweeping across,
With their banner of darkness abroad on the breeze,
And their war-drum arousing the slumbering seas;
Then, white-wingéd courser, thy sinews of might
Must be braced for the battle, and strong for the fight.

Hoarse howls the night-trumpet; and gathering fast
From their rock-bounded caverns, the king of the blast
Has marshalled his cohorts; yet pale with affright
Are the wild mountain-genii, and feeble their might;
For the horse and his rider—a long, gleaming mass—
Through the heart of the mountain triumphantly pass.

Alone in the desert! Its denizens came—
Red riders of ruin on whirlwinds of flame,
The blasting sirocco, the deadly simoom,
With sand-serried spectres deep-shrouded in gloom;—
To *him* they are naught; for his limbs never tire,
Whose form is of iron, whose spirit is fire!

Take me Home.

Mother, my heart is chill!
I'm weary—I would sleep. Oh! take me home!
Give me some lulling, lethean anodyne
To steep the quivering senses of this clay
In slumber strange and dreamless—death's eclipse:
Then bear the drooping spirit to thy home
Beyond the singing stars.

There is a spell
Of ice upon my soul: its freezing chain,
Steeped in a gnawing poison, presses down
Until the clankless fetters slowly change
All beauty into bitterness. My brain
Is 'wildered too, and reeling with the strife,
The mighty struggle of its warring thoughts
And fierce imaginings. The homeless mind,
That flamed at times as some red comet-star,
Or glowed anon, a steady, shining sun,
Now darkles on its weary, wandering way

Like the pale nebulæ far wavering through
The starless desert of the Southern Pole—
Lost, lost, and lone! O Mother, guide it home!
  The brazen portals of a dull despair
Close on me with a hoarse and sullen clang,
That, shuddering, jars upon my haunted soul,
Which, like a bell in some dim, ruined tower,
Swung by the sighing, solitary wind,
Flings back a hollow echo.
                Lights of life,
All pale and lurid, dimly burn around,
As fading lamps at morning o'er the death
Of Pleasure, in her lonely banquet-hall;
And aspirations, hopes that led me on
To dare attain the unattainable,
Now flit before me, strange and meaningless,
As half-formed images that darkle through
An idiot's vacant brain.
                The world to me
Is like a Sphinx—huge, dark, and mystical;
From whose still, stony eyes I win no glance
Of kindly sympathy—whose granite lip,
Fixed, rigid with one everlasting smile,
Mocks at the anguish of my spirit's cry.
  Hide me, my Mother, in the kindly gloom
That wraps the vale of shadows: oh! lift up
This weariness, which, like an avalanche,

And freezing as its adamantine waves,
Seems crushing out the energies of life,
And filling up the dreary, aching void
With idiotic madness—terrors vague
That creep like reptiles thro' the ruined brain
And crumbling heart.
Give me the anodyne:
Ere phantom madness seize me, let me sleep!
Come, come, my Mother, save thy truant child—
Sweet Mother, take me home!

One or Two?

ARE we one, my sister dearest?
One or two, my azure-eyed,
Sunny-hearted gipsy—fairest
Little laughter-loving Lide?
Like the fabled "Star" and "Stella"
To the morn and even sun,
Don't you think, sweet Zingarella,
That our spirits are but one?

Blending brightly, shall we frame them
Into Spring's Æolian tune;
Or, disparting softly, name them
Laughing May and smiling June?
As the sunshine and the shower,
That in flashing jewels run
Through one golden April hour,
So our spirits are but one.

Joy to them is like the springing
Of the birdling's choral swell—
Sweetly wild, and softly ringing
With a chiming matin-bell;
And when round them sadly linger
Shadows of the lovely flown,
Sorrow's pale and tear-dewed finger
Writes upon them—"Ye are one."

Long ago our gentle mother
Sought the sunny spirit-land,
And we never had a brother—
So we wander, hand in hand,
Through life's labyrinthine mazes,
Where to guide us there are none;
Yet, amid its thousand phases,
Still our spirits are but one.

Smile, my love! the great All-seeing
Is our FATHER; and we bow
To the land which gave us being
As our noble *mother* now:
Pillared flame and cloud before us
Through the wilderness begun,
They shall journey, watching o'er us,
That our spirits may be one.

I have often thought, if only
I might pass from earth with you,
That our hearts would ne'er be lonely,
If in heaven we were but two;
Yet a deeper bliss is given
Us to know—our mission done,
As on earth, so in the heaven
Shall our spirits be but one!

The Blasted Tree.

Hoarse and sullen the night-winds sigh,
Through the gnarléd branches mournfully,
Till a voice creeps up like an augury,
And this is the song of the blasted tree:—

Ha! ha! this is life! With the tempest at war,
The storm-god has left me with many a scar:
He marshalled his squadrons; they came in the power
Of serried tornadoes, to blast and devour;
But I shook my old gauntlet, all ready to dare,
With a shout of defiance, the armies of air.

I laugh at the whirlwind, as cloud after cloud
It dashes to mist o'er the battlements proud;
When the hill's rocky ramparts have rattled and rang
To the hurricane's raging and thunderous clang;
For I stand like a king on his blood-girdled throne,
And I brave its wild fury unaided, alone.

Swift wind of the wilderness! mighty and free,
What terrors hast thou for the blast-smitten tree?
Thou piercest my bosom with arrowy stings,
Thou strikest my frame with thy terrible wings:
Bring arrow and pinion, in anger combined,
They shall not avail thee, O pitiless wind!

Thou Frost-King, with kisses so mystic and vague,
Like the still-falling curse of the merciless plague,
Come, lay thy chill fingers all night on my brow—
Their touch cannot injure the bare, blackened bough:
Come, drop thy cold pestilence deep in my heart—
No torturing pang can its poison impart.

And thou, the Sun-despot—a phantom of fire,
O'erwhelming the noontide with glances of ire;
With eyeballs deep-blazing, and far-flashing hair,
On wings of the lightning thou plungest in air;
The green forest droops in thy withering path,
But the old tree undaunted has breasted thy wrath.

Yet one is mine enemy, fearful and strong;
He has followed me far, he has haunted me long.
He looked on Creation: his perilous eye
Shall see all mortality blossom and die:
He soon shall o'ertake me: I hear the deep chime
That heralds the march of my conqueror—TIME!

The "Great River."

Strong, deep, resistless, thro' Columbia's heart
Thou rollest, mighty river—coursing on
Like some great, shining thought Omnipotence
Has wakened in its depths.
Sublime, serene,
Through summer's gorgeousness or winter's gloom,
When glassing back the sunshine, or the dark
And tempest-tossed battalions of the sky;
And, like a great soul, beautifully calm
When star-showers fall, as though the frenzied gods
Would weep upon thy bosom tears of flame.
Most beautiful art thou, majestical,
And panoplied in grandeur by repose
As others by the tempest. Thine is not
The crested multitude of warrior-waves
That boom and battle on the "stormy Gulf;"
The wild Atlantic billows, shivered white

Upon deceitful breakers, murmuring
Low curses round their torturers; nor yet
The rush of rapids, gloom and glory blent,
Where might and madness struggle in the heart
Of dread Niagara. But glorious
And lovely as the "Milky Way"—the stream
Of light that courses through a starry land,
And, far beyond the night-cloud, is to thee
What loves of heaven are to the loved on earth!
Thou, too, art flowing thro' the "Land of Stars"—
A blesséd bond of Union: never may
Its links be sundered till the sky-stream fades
In ether, and its golden shores dissolve
To nothingness!
Tell us, when far away
In Time's gray dawning still the nations slept,
Didst thou all proudly cleave the wilderness,
As sweeps a mighty vision through the brain
Of slumbering Titan? Tribes of long ago,
Whose path of empire lies amid the clouds
Of mystery, have fled, and left no voice
To whisper of their glories. Warrior-chiefs,
Whose council-circles on thy margin shone;
The Indian maid, whose shallop swept thy wave
Swift as the swallow's pinion, passed away
As foam from off the billow. Now the Power
That rules an iron-arteried domain,

Sails with the steam-fiend, chains the tongue of fire
Whose voice is in the hurricane; who makes
A slave of wild Impossibility—
The genius of my country waves his wand
O'er thy broad bosom. Still art thou the same;
And hoary centuries shall fall, like plumes
Slow-dropping from the weary wing of Time,
Yet leave thee as they found thee, beautiful.

No haughty heights are here, like those that pour
Red lava to the equinoctial sun;
No mural palisades of iron ice,
As curb the surges of the frozen Pole;
Yet one may stand on thy long, wooded shores,
And, from the summit of some mountain thought,
Gaze forth upon a continent of Time,
With two great oceans; for behind it lies
Eternity inscrutable—before,
Eternity incomprehensible!

Thou hast a voice, proud river, and my soul
Springs forth to catch its lessons, as a child
To meet its mother's smile. The morning brings
Thy soft, clear hallelujah, and my heart
Echoes in unison—"Praise God, praise God!"
The deep meridian reigneth: light and strength
Have met upon thy waters, teaching me
That power is only greatness when 't is blent
With truth immaculate. 'T is midnight lone;

Yet, bearing on the steamer's stately form,
I hear thy never-resting waters flow,
And murmur as they glide—"Oh! weary not!
LIFE lies in action, and the use of Time
Is DESTINY!"

NOTE.—The name Mississippi is composed of two words—*Messes* (great) and *Seppe*, (river:) the original signification then is, the "Great River," and not the "Father of Waters."

Miserere of the Pines.

THERE'S a voice upon the hill-top and a song within the vale;
Fairy carols in the woodland, spirit-whispers on the gale;
A merry mermaid-chorus in the ocean's sparry caves,
And a bold, triumphant pæan from the ever-tossing waves;
But sweeter to my spirit, when the autumn day declines,
Comes the stately, solemn, swelling miserere of the Pines.

There is music in the morning, there is harmony at eve,
In the rich, fantastic overtures the boughs and breezes weave;
Dreamy melody at noontide from the willow-hidden rills,
Or the hunter's bugle sounding on the far-off, breezy hills;
But when round the brow of midnight red the starry Serpent shines,
I love the stately, solemn miserere of the Pines.

When the firefly beacon glitters thro' the twilight everglades,
And the birds have sunk to slumber in the woodland colonnades,
Comes a murmur like the wild-bee, in the meadow-lily's bell,
That deepens to the thunders of an organ's rolling swell,

As the night-wind, creeping slowly thro' ten thousand leafy
tines,
Wakes the stately, solemn, swelling miserere of the Pines.

The Palm, in sensuous beauty, and the Oak's defiant pride,
Bow, as the banded tempest sweeps the forest-phalanx wide;
But the keen mid-winter wind, upon the ocean's rocky shore,
Calls forth from out the dark pine-grove a mimic surge's roar;
And, as the serried waters pass their storm-embattled lines,
Seem marching to the stately miserere of the Pines.

Funereal anthems float far down the dim cathedral nave,
Where crested Valor's marble form lies shrouded for the grave;
But not so proud a dirge is his, as that which echoes wide
Above the pilgrim lone who perished on the mountain-side,
As thro' the wild witch-hazel tree that o'er his rest reclines
Steals on the solemn, swelling miserere of the Pines.

Oh! many a thrilling melody at midnight revels free,
And music at the day-spring sounds her hymn of jubilee;
But like the thousand echoes that awake within the heart—
Strong in their very gentleness, a blessing to impart
By bringing buried jewels from the spirit's secret mines—
Is the stately, solemn, swelling miserere of the Pines.

Insanity.

God! what a night of horrors!
Wake, rouse me! Ah! strike down the fiendish fear
That fastens on my loathing soul, and crush
The serpent-dreams that curdle in my brain!
Take off the ghastly Horror, ere its eyes
Scorch up my life-blood, and its reeking breath
Blinds me with pestilential poison—foul
From out the charnel-house!
Ha! gone? awake?
Is that the sun? I will bethink me—ah!
What hideous vision was it passed me then?
What nameless terror, wrapped in formless gloom?
What lurid, dark-plumed phantasy of hell?
I am awake: the morn is up, and yet
A dark remembrance lies upon my soul,
Like the chance dropping of a raven's plume
Upon a snow-drift, white and desolate.

It is the shadow of that fearful dream,
That vision of the maniac demon-power,
Which crushes immortality to dust,
And digs a grave for the dissolving soul.
Monarch of madness! thou, and thou alone,
Art "King of Terrors"—strong to slay the soul,
And make the brain its living sepulchre.
Dread despot of annihilation's realm!
Thyself a nothingness, a formless void,
Deep-shrouded in a veil of vagueness, where
Thy features seem a horny, chilling glare,
With naught distinguishable save thine eyes,
Which hold such deeps of desert vacancy
As tell there is no soul within, to light
Its star-fire in their dreary solitudes.
And yet a mighty power is thine, thou ghoul,
Full feeding on decaying senses—fiend
And vampire, draining out the very streams
Of immortality. Stern Judgment falls
Before thee senseless from his throne; and strong,
Proud Reason, building up her columned arch
Of lofty argument, forgets her work
And dies beneath its ruins, when thy breath
O'erwhelms it, like the desert-pillared sand
Before the simoom. Fancy's dancing light,
The Borealis of the mind, is quenched,
Imagination's mirror ground to dust;

And worse than all, tomb-breaker, thou dost tear
The pure, heart-graves of Memory, and strew
The treasures of its buried loves abroad,
All trampled and debased!
'T is agony
To see a spirit writhing in thy chains,
As first the struggling senses reel, and strive
To grasp once more a memory or a hope,
And vainly strive, as does the blasted tree
To clasp the fleeting wind. Anon the brain
Becomes a hungry hydra's swarming lair,
Whence, wild with terror, bursting all its bars,
The stung and startled spirit shrieking flies
On bloody, burning pinions—flies alone
To faint and perish in thy black abyss.
Then idiot laughter echoes from its grave,
Hollow and fearful as the earth's first fall
Upon the coffin-lid; and yet 't is joy
To thee, thou gloomy conqueror of Mind,
And thou dost gloat above the dust of all
That mortals deem immortal.
Death is kind:
Oh! when the heart is weary, and the soul
Is wrung with wretchedness, she opes her arms,
And, like a soft-voiced angel, woos to rest
Upon her pulseless bosom. Yes, the grave
And Death are kind; but *thy* devouring worms

In madness seize upon the living brain,
And riot in the warm and bounding heart!
Oh! let affliction's torture rack out life
In sudden spasms, or drop by drop the fierce,
Wrung spirit weep its tears of burning gall—
The angel Death come panoplied in woe—
But save us, FATHER, from the Phantom-King
Who chains the spirit's energies, and drags
It down, down, down to his abysmal realm—
A hell of idiotic nothingness!

Te Deum Laudamus.

Te Deum Laudamus! It rings like a warning
Afar up the cloud-columned dome of the morning;
When light gilds the East with a smile iridescent,
And the pale moon is hiding her glimmering crescent;
When star-fires in ether are slowly declining,
And the dawn of the beautiful Sabbath is shining.

This hymn to the Deity, soft silence breaking,
Comes not from a dread Druid circle awaking;
No "Io triumphe" of Jove or of Pallas,
No wild Aztec chant from a proud Teocallis;
Nor yet does it rise where the anthem is pealing,
And multitudes low to the Saviour are kneeling.

Te Deum Laudamus! 'T is Nature's diurnal
Devotional song to Jehovah Eternal;
Where shadows of Time, in a mystic rehearsal,
Give voice to the tones of a hymn universal,
Till stately and solemn is echoing o'er us
The infinite swell of Eternity's chorus!

The light, with resplendent and shadowless current,
Comes down, like a blessing from God, all-apparent:
It comes, and the heart of the universe, filling
With visible music, in rapture is thrilling,
And, as wind-haunted caverns, the deep souls of men
Reëcho the great "Hallelujah" again!

Te Deum Laudamus! The air waxes denser,
The bright valley glows like a mist-shrouded censer;
As a vast fluted organ, the deep mountain-gorges
Roll onward and upward their musical surges;
And the far sound of waters, in dim forests straying,
Steals up like the murmur of multitudes praying.

Down the long woodland aisles is that melody sounding,
Arousing the lark from the shadows surrounding:
All fresh from the rite of a dewy baptismal,
Swift soaring he fades in the ether abysmal,
As erst, while the anthem and orison blended,
The soul of a young saint to glory ascended.

Te Deum Laudamus! Sublimely and slowly
Goes up the great voice of this festival holy;
All clouds as it rises disparting asunder
With a grand diapason of jubilant thunder,
Triumphant, yet bowed to the Mighty who swayeth
A realm of archangels—"Lord God of Sabaoth!"

Lucifer.

"A young Italian artist once drew a representation of Lucifer, so vivid and glowing that it left the canvas and came into the painter's soul; in other words, haunted his mind by night and by day, producing at last frenzy and death."

'Twas night upon the Arno. Witchingly
To starlit waters sighed the southern wind,
Yet wakened not their slumbers: soft the earth
Sank to her dewy dreamings, and the sky
Embosomed in its depths a mystery
Which stole within the spirit, shadowing
Faint visions of Eternity and God!
High o'er the waters hung a single star,
Far gleaming from the casement of an old
And lone palazzo, haunted, hastening
To ruin and decay. 'Twas the abode
Of beauty, pride, and misery. Within
A lofty chamber drearily up-streamed
Tall waxen tapers, waking phantasies
Grotesque upon the bare and mouldy walls,

Where half was light, half panoplied in gloom.
The radiance blazed upon a picture, lone
And strangely beautiful. As one entranced,
Before it the young painter stood transfixed,
And gazed, half shrinkingly, upon his proud
And terrible creation. Tangled curls
Hung damp upon his brow, and heavy drops
Of mental agony: his straining eye
Had a wild lustre, and the restless gleam,
Which would have died to tear itself away,
Yet clung upon the canvas. He was mad!
His was a haunted midnight of the mind,
Where echoed one lone passion: love and home,
Pleasure and fortune he had flung aside,
And given his spirit to ambition, which,
If crime it must be called, was sure the first
Proud sin of the archangels.

Lucifer!

The portraiture had kindled 'neath his touch,
As from the red air-crystals God lit up
The fiery battle-star: with burning dyes,
That gleamed upon his being from the skies,
He painted on, till feeling waxed a curse,
And thought a maddened frenzy. Seemingly,
From out a lurid chaos, vague and vast,
Bounded the fallen angel, and the gloom
Blazed in his swarthy lustre. From his proud,

Inflated nostril streamed a breath of flame,
And every graceful and colossal limb
Was tensioned with such deadly spring as nerves
The couchant tiger. Round about him hung
A wild and savage loneliness; and yet
Supremely desolate, and desolately calm
In horrible sublimity. Afar
His mighty pinions swept along the sky,
Like triple night descending: deep within
Their heavy plumes were stains of blood, which glowed
Like crimson comet-stars; and round his heart
The hydra "worm undying" writhed in fire
Unquenchable. His high, uplifted brow,
Where dwelt the haughty spirit which defied
Omnipotence, upon its adamant
Bore record of ten thousand lightnings; yet
There shone a gloomy glory, which revealed
The mountain soul that threw its haggard cliffs
In mockery to heaven! The blasting spell
Of his deep eye was strong and terrible;
Within, a Pandemonium which cast
Its glances forth—a mingled multitude
Of swiftly darting fiends. Its serpent gaze
Clasped the boy-painter's soul, and fed upon
The life of his young being.

Hist! the knell
Of midnight, from some distant convent-bell.

The painter started suddenly: a gleam
Crossed his wan features, lighting up a while
The heart so weary and the eyes so wild.
He spoke, with shuddering utterance: his voice
Seemed the wild sobbing of some wailing wind
That struggles up beneath its weary weight
Of tempest-crowded darkness:—

"Pride-monarch! with my pencil swift and free,
I would have traced a god from heaven hurled;
But *thou* hast sprung, a dread reality,
From the deep bosom of a darker world!
Some dire abyss where angels never trod,
Fierce outlaw from the Paradise of God!

"I feel thee in the strong, unearthly thrill
That checks the deep life-currents as they roll;
Thine iron influences chain me still,
Dread dweller in the shadows of my soul!
Spare me, ah! spare me the remorseless ire
That rages 'neath thy diadem of fire!

"I wandered once upon the wings of light:
I climbed the steep of heaven from star to star,
Half pierced the veil that shrouds the Infinite,
And caught the chorus from those realms afar,
Where twice ten thousand, in seraphic choirs,
Roll back the anthems from immortal lyres.

"There was a time, mine was the courage high
That sends the war-horse bounding on the spears;
When Danger's self, before my dauntless eye
And deeds of daring, quailed in hollow fears.
I dread *thee* now, thou lost and lightning-driven—
Ay, more than death beneath the bolts of Heaven!

"Shade of the mighty! thou art dark and lone;
Yet, through the fiend-lights gathered in thine eye,
It seems at intervals as sorrow shone,
As though 't would ask e'en human sympathy.
My soul is wrung to give it thee, and weeps
Great drops of anguish from its tortured deeps.

"All love's sweet pulses, passion's glowing dreams,
The gorgeous phantoms of mine earlier day,
Hope, pleasure, memory, crushed and broken themes,
Swept by one waving of thy wing away:
Now, dread magnificence, thy burning shrine
Takes the last ashes of this life of mine!"

'T was early dawning: cheerily its beam
Crept through the narrow casement, with the voice
Of wakened winds and waters, and the chime
Of far-off matin-bells. The artist-boy
Lay wrapped in slumber 'neath the tapers pale
And blazing picture. A mysterious spell

Held the light pinion of his spirit furled;
For life, and misery, and pride had flown,
And all but beauty left the desolate.
Peace to him,
The tempest-tossed and weary! True, the world
Had gloomy thoughts of him; and one by one
It cast them on his memory, till the cairn
Grew to a lone and melancholy monument.
We pass, to fling upon the rugged stones
A fragile garland from the groves of song,
And Pity's pale, sweet blossoms, murmuring—
"Rest, troubled spirit, rest!"

The Mount of Mind.

By the ocean of Time, from the plain of Existence,
Extending afar to a limitless distance,
Enwreathed in a great aureola of glory,
Outshining the splendors of orient story—
A day-dream Elysian, all clearly defined,
Rose up to my vision the Mountain of Mind!

'T was a sun to the present, and widely it cast
Effulgence far over the Future and Past:
The sides were emblazoned, and richly bedight
With banners and columns, reflecting the light:
Time surged at its base, but the spirits that shone
On its star-jewelled brow, were "Eternity's own."

On the base of that mountain a throng of pretenders
Had taken the semblance of Mind's true defenders;
But their voices were hollow and faint as the shell
When mocking old Ocean's magnificent swell:
They stood in the glitter of flattery's flame,
And when it had faded, they perished in shame.

Above them stood one by a selfish ambition
Escaping the fangs of an utter perdition:
Dark dreams to his brain, in a fearful reviewing,
Came flitting like bats through a ghoul-haunted ruin;
And e'en in the chalice, his cup of salvation,
There lurked the black coils of a venomed temptation.

And near him the cynic: the heart-stifled cry
Of all better nature sat crouched in his eye:
Within his cold bosom, a cloud with no brightening,
Lay torpid a thousand red serpents of lightning.
Then woe to the weak when the muttering thunder
Rends rudely the sullen envelope asunder!

Far higher, still chanting a lofty Te Deum,
There journeyed a band: in a proud mausoleum
They piled the white marbles of mind o'er the tomb
Of loves that had perished in silence and gloom;
And washed with their tears, from the laureate wreath,
The dust of the hearts that had mouldered beneath.

To Science, encircled by luminous clouds,
Pale, eagle-eyed pilgrims ascended in crowds:
The sage who had sounded the oceans of heaven,
And brought up the star-pearls from space-billows riven,
Blest also the neophyte, bidding him give
His heart to the Goddess of Wisdom, and live.

The statesman stood forth, like a beacon at night
Aloft on the precipice' perilous height:
When viewed from the valley, his towering fame
Streamed up like a still, steady column of flame:
He alone felt its tossing and deep agitation,
When faction swept over his proud elevation.

And there, too, invested with laurel and lyre,
Stood woman, baptized with "the spirit and fire."
The opaline drops of her beautiful chrism
Shook off the soft light like a rich-tinted prism;
And her sweet spirit shone in its innocence vestal—
A dew-drop enshrined in a jewel of crystal.

Yet one sat alone in her station of pride,
The star on her brow fell to dust at her side;
The high heart, all sullied and fettered by sin,
Lay cold in its charnel, and shame walled it in!
Oh! woe for thee, GENIUS, if under thine eyes
The white dove of purity struggles and dies!

Yet proud is thy power, with pinion unfurled,
To crush back the scorn of a grovelling world;
When, stainless as snow-flakes, and swift as the wind,
Thou scalest the pinnacled Mountain of Mind,
Unresting, unwearied, till free thou hast trod
Its flame-mantled summit—the presence of GOD!

Little Children.

Bless God for little children,
With their winsome, wiling ways,
And their dewy freshness blooming
Through the sunny summer-days.
Oh! they spring around the homestead
Like sweet blossoms in a bower;
And the heart that does not love them
Is a field without a flower.

Like to golden rays of sunshine
Cradled in a valley lone,
Rosy, smiling groups will nestle
By the lowly threshold stone;
And they light the happy fireside
When the laughing day is done:
Oh! the hearth without their glances
Is a land without a sun.

Love those merry, dancing fairies
  Of the changeful mind and mood,
As they roam the grassy meadow,
  Or go trooping through the wood.
Make their guileless spirits cloudless,
  And their lives a holiday;
For a home without their mischief
  Is a year without its May!

Blessings on their angel faces
  With the stainless brow and eyes,
Which mirror back the purity
  And softness of the skies.
Bless the gleeful tones, bespeaking
  Hearts so light, and wills so free:—
Oh! the earth, without such voices,
  Were devoid of melody.

God loveth little children!
  And He "suffers them to come,"
When the worldling frowns upon them,
  To a happy Eden-home.
And should He take the blossoms
  Which we cherish as our own,
'T is because that *heaven*, without them,
  Seemeth desolate and lone!

Voices.

The voice
Is Beauty's true interpreter, and Truth's
Translator. Listen to the melodies
Of Nature—to the chiming of the hours—
The mighty music of continuous thought—
The rushing sweep of some advancing soul;—
And are they not all eloquent to thee
Of glory and of beauty? Sterling Truth
Lives also in the voice; for we employ,
But cannot fetter it with guile, or mask
Its feeling with deceit. It shudders low,
With terror inarticulate: it moans
Reproaches that we will not syllable:
It falters with the burden of a love
Unutterable; and betrays the hate
We struggle to deny. Around the hearth
Are mingled voices of the household's glee,
And loving tones, whose wealth of tenderness

Reveals how beautiful and true the hearts
Warm beating in white bosoms.
Bards that strike
The key-note to the music mysteries
Of other minds, must steal a master-chord
From Nature, stirring in the silent soul
Soft symphonies. The waking-note may be
The silvery trumpet-call of morn—the sigh
Of weary waters panting up the shore
To die upon the sands—low undertones
Of shy, sweet laughter from the growing flowers,
Or midnight's monody that deep and slow
Creeps through the wild witch-hazel tree, and swells
High in the organ-pines. To stir the soul
With holier harmonies, the poet takes
The voice of Memory. 'T is like the call
Of the muezzin on his minaret,
Sounding "To prayer! to prayer!" reëchoing
The lost love-music of the olden time—
The songs of home, the merry-ringing shouts
About the hedges, over treasures found—
Rich ruby berries, or the golden-brown
Ripe nuts down-dropping on the yellow leaves.
And then no summer sunshine was so bright
As one soft smile—no azure sky so clear
As one blue eye; and then in all the world
There seemed no music save one flute-like voice,

And that was our sweet mother's. Ah! the first
Sad exile from that smile, and eye, and tone,
Was *silence*—silence brooding o'er decay:
The voice was gone: we knew so well its note
Should answer ours no more; no, not if all
The universe were void, and we within
The vaulted vast stood still and lone, to call,
And yearn, and listen!

Mournfully we dwell
Awhile upon the earth, amid its toil
And tempest-tossings; yet *one* voice of ours
Can enter heaven—the whispering of prayer.
Like some meek pilgrim from a shore afar
Warm-welcomed to the festival of kings,
It mingles in the seraph's rushing strain,
That fills the arches of th' eternal courts
With "Holy, holy evermore;" a faint,
Soft-ringing "Alleluia!"

I Love Thee.

I LOVE thee when the spring awakes
The fairy-peopled flowers,
And early sunshine softly breaks
O'er emerald-tinted bowers.
When echoes through the green arcades
The zephyr's viewless flute,
And in the cloudlet dim the lark
Tunes his aërial lute,
I love thee; for our playmates then
Are bird, and breeze, and bee;
And spring, when thou art far away,
Has naught of joy for me.

I love thee when the summer-time
O'er the blue ocean smiles,
And flings her royal banners forth
Upon his thousand isles.

When from the sun the fountain's spray
A rosy flush receives,
And the sweet south wind steals along
To kiss the whispering leaves;
When white-winged cloudlets wander up
The zenith far and free,
I love thee; and if thou art gone,
They have no charm for me.

I love thee when the autumn mild,
With many a gorgeous hue,
Is painting beauty on the wood,
And on the mountain blue.
When Indian summer's mellow haze
O'er all the valley lies,
And sheds around the bleakest spot
A splendor from the skies,
I love thee in those dreamy days;
Yet if I do not see
Thy rosy lip, and azure eyes,
They have no light for me.

I love thee when the winter's chain
Is on the streamlet's springs,
And round the casement drearily
The wailing night-wind sings;

For then, beside the glowing hearth,
Thy cheek is pressed to mine;
And bending o'er some pleasant book,
Our "nut-brown curls" entwine.
I love thee; and the witching page,
Or games of frolic glee,
Are dull when thou art absent, love—
They have no spell for me.

I love thee, sister; and my heart,
Amid its airy dreams,
Still turns to thee, its better part,
For all its brightest beams.
Its joys and sorrows all are thine;
For unto thee is given
The sunbeam's glory—touching earth
With hues of holy heaven.
Then oh! when death is near us, may
It take me too with thee;
For life, when *thou* hast left it, love,
Will have no place for me!

Dolce Far Niente.

TO ———, 27TH JULY.

"'Tis idlesse all:" the stealthy-footed hours
Pass on unchallenged, and the moments float
Like motes upon the beam, unnoted by.
Nothing to do! come bind upon thy brow
The lotus-garland of the Sybarite,
Freighted with memories, and phantasies,
And day-dreams, dedicate to drowsy thought's
Delicious idleness.
The summer noon
With amber and unshadowed light has filled
The atmosphere. Up from the parching plain
(Visible nothingness) the burning air
Rises in waves; and the deep-rooted hills,
Far in the purple distance, seem to reel
And quiver in the heat. Slow, zephyr-borne
Up the transparent, penetrable blue,
Two white clouds wander, like to Juno's swans,
Stately and beautiful, and seeming formed
Of snowy plumage, not of unshed dew;

The rose-queen of the garden, drooping, leans
Upon her emerald throne; the panting birds
Are nestled in the thickets, and the bee
In the rich tulip's crimson cradle sinks
To balmy slumbers. Silent, silent all,
Save a soft, silky rustle where the trees
Droop to the droning tides; where, iris-hued,
Low-humming insects glance on filmy wings
Over the pool; or from the fountain's brim
Shoots a tall column of dissolving gold,
Dashed here and there with jewels.

Not afar
Lies the cool, quiet woodland, where the shades
Fall deeply on the waters, till they seem
To darkle onward in a shadowy,
Star-sentinelled repose; and where the sun,
Obliquely peering through the leafy screen,
Traces upon the mossy turf its quaint
Rich arabesques. Along the dark ravine
Echoes an elfin laugh, as though the flowers
Were hiding shyly from the beam and breeze
Down in the dewy hollows.

But my soul
(The essence of a dreamy indolence)
Would bear thee to her Paradise. 'T is where
The old elm shadows lie along the wall,
And down the colonnade, a bubbling spring

Sings in the twilight; and beneath the boughs
Of twin bloom-laden orange trees, there swings
A white net-hammock, like the hanging nest
Of some bright oriole. In negligent
And gossamer array, thrown listlessly
Upon it—like a lazy cloud above
The swaying tree-tops—rest thee, by the breeze
Rocked idly to and fro. The lulling wave,
The subtle odors, and the softened light,
Are all around thee; and the "sweet south wind"
Pours o'er the languidly untensioned limbs
Like a cool, balmy bath. By chance is heard
A far-off bugle-note—the soul is soon
Swayed in a net of reveries. The heart,
As some wild bird upon its downy nest,
Sinks down within the bosom wearily;
But through the hazy, sleepy atmosphere,
Carelessly graceful as they rise or fall,
Its thoughts go floating like the thistle's down.
A lulling tide of drowsy phantasies
Sweeps through the spirit which it bears along,
Sweet as when, sailing o'er a glassy lake,
With arms dropt in the wave, the waters glide
Soft-thrilling through the fingers.

Rest thee now,
And dream; and in thy dream's Elysium
"Remember!"

"Oh! would I were at Home!"

The rosy-lit horizon's flush
Held in its depths afar,
Soft as the wane of Beauty's blush,
The paling morning-star.
In snowy folds the silver mist
To wood and water gave
A veil, through which the sunlight kissed
The still and sleeping wave.

'T was joyance all: the valley smiled,
The very air was balm,
Yet sadly moaned a mountain child
Where waved the lowland palm.
Alone and sick at heart he lay
Beneath its leafy dome,
And sighed and murmured all the day—
"O would I were at home!

"I weary of this emerald plain,
And of the breezeless lake,
This broad expanse of waving cane,
Where no wild echoes wake.
I weary of this changeless sky's
Untroubled deeps of light,
And of the garden's gorgeous dyes,
With blossoms always bright.

"Oh for the mountain's breezy side,
The roaring of the pines,
The eyrie where the eagles bide,
And red the beacon shines!
Where down the beetling crags the loud-
Voiced thunders crashing come,
Swift riding on the tempest-cloud—
Oh! would I were at home!"

The world has many chords that strike
The symphonies of joy,
And yet, sweet friend, my heart is like
That homesick mountain boy.
The summer day is long and bright,
The summer skies are blue,
And swiftly speeds the summer night
With laugh, and song, and *you*.

The earth is very beautiful;
And not to feel, or know,
Or love, would seem undutiful;
For GOD has made it so.
But yet, 'mid all its loveliness,
I would the hour were come
When angel-watchers bend to bless,
And bear my spirit "HOME!"

The Ghouls.

"Two terrible spectres, called the 'Searchers of the Grave,' in the creed of the orthodox Mohammedans."

TRAMP! tramp! to a ghostly tramp
Echoed the churchyard dark and damp:
Slowly swung as the hinges grate,
Shrieking folded the iron gate:
Sullen sounds from the belfry fell,
Muffled moans from its brazen bell;
And spectres twain have crouched beside
The new-made grave of a murdered bride.
Tramp! tramp! on the marble meet
The hollow clank of their skeleton feet:
A rattling clasp of their bony hands,
And each of the other his health demands.
"Whence and whither?" 'T was Moukir spoke:
His voice of fear on the midnight broke;

But no reply, save a sidelong sneer,
Cast askance with a hideous leer,
The other deigned him. Then suddenly,
In a gibbering spasm of fiendish glee,
He sang:—his feet on the turf kept time
To the hollow chant of a weird old rhyme:—

"Whence cometh Nakir?—where slaves in their glee
With shouts rend the air round a tall gallows-tree,
Where the corpse of a murderer swings to the night!
And whither goes Nakir?—his hurrying flight
Seeks out the fair victim who perished in woe
At her blood-ended bridal! She slumbers below.

"They have given us two: the dark minion of pride
And the blossom he trampled—the beautiful bride.
That night to his chamber, all senseless and wan,
They bore her young lover: a palsied old man
He woke in the morning: the days will be few
Ere the arrow has sped, and he slumbers here too.

"From a region of dread, from a realm of despair,
We journey afar on the highways of air;
And we come with a sullen, dull-echoing tread,
To lead a wild measure—the dance of the dead,
Where the prince and the peasant, the guilty and gay,
Are gathered at last to their dwellings of clay.

"They brought from the palace, with anthem and prayer,
The icy remains of the new-christened heir:
The sire was dejected, the mother grew wild,
As the clods clattered over her beautiful child:
The grass scarcely over the low grave had crept
When again it was opened—the pale mother slept.

"They brought the proud maiden, despoiled of her bloom;
They laid her to slumber in silence and gloom:
Her snow-sculptured bosom, so pulseless and cold,
All quietly pillows the gathering mould:
No gesture of loathing, nor shudder, nor start,
As the worm nestles down in her passionless heart.

"They brought the grim despot, bereft of his throne;
In tyranny, terror, and triumph he shone:
Alas! for the reptile assuming to sway
A sceptre of dust over creatures of clay!
They bore out his ashes with riotous glee,
And his knell was their pæan of wild jubilee.

"They brought the dead miser, so haggard and cold,
Whose life was a libel, whose god was his gold:
All careless they gossiped, as over the stones
In the rumbling old death-cart they jostled his bones;
And e'en the dull blind-worm, it loathed him when dead,
And turned from a banquet so meagrely spread!

"They brought the pale scholar: for glory in vain
His wrung spirit tortured a feverish brain:
He shrank from the rich, he avoided the proud,
He stood all alone in the revelling crowd:
He struggled for honors—no honors for him;
And the gaunt eye grew glassy, the life-star grew dim.

"The warrior-chieftain went forth in his pride:
His love was dominion, his sword was his bride:
'T was a wild battle midnight—the foray was vain—
A festering corse he was left on the plain,
And famishing vultures, they ate out the eye
That flashed with defiance when summoned to die.

"The brow where Ambition has planted a crown,
Pale Luxury pressing his pillow of down,
The image of Beauty, the idol of Fame,
Will shudder and shriek at our terrible name;
Yet ho! for the banquet! the king and the slave
Alike are the prey of the "Lords of the Grave!"

"Chateaux en Espagne."

The day-dreams of youth! they are fitful and fleeting,
And thousands who dreamed them before us have gone
To the valley of shadows; yet still, ever cheating,
The finger of Fancy will beckon us on
To regions resplendent with aureate gilding,
Where bright Ideality summons a train
Of artisan fairies, to aid us in building
Those airy pavilions, our "Castles in Spain."

When the loved of the soul one by one have departed,
And left us alone to a cheerless sojourn;
When afar they are scattered, the gay, the true-hearted,
Or pass to the land "whence no tidings return;"
How brightly they gather, how fondly bend o'er us,
To soothe away sorrow and shield us from pain,
Still bringing the blessings of childhood before us
While dwelling in Memory's "Castles in Spain."

The heart may be lonely, dejected, and weary,
Low-bowed by the scorn or the torture of foes,
Who make its pure Eden a wilderness dreary,
Deep planting the thistle where blossomed the rose.
Yet not till is "dim" all the "fine gold" of feeling,
Which hid in the mines of the spirit has lain,
Will the "right hand" of Hope "lose its cunning," revealing
Its treasures adorning our "Castles in Spain."

Though lost and forlorn we may wander unheeding
Through valleys enamelled with blossoms of Spring,
As tho' 't were a desert, the heart that is bleeding
From out the far future a solace may bring,
If down by the wayside our weariness flinging,
We take up the ether and sunbeam again,
And work, while the spirit is smiling and singing,
To build up our beautiful "Castles in Spain."

Though vain are the hopes of the dreamer, they haunt him,
As, crushed by the Real, he bids them adieu,
Or watches them while, as a beautiful phantom,
Away in the distance they fade from his view.
Still, still let us dream by the murmuring river
Of phantasy, gliding through Fancy's domain,
In revery's labyrinth roving for ever,
And building its palaces—"Castles in Spain."

The Beautiful South.

"Know'st thou the land" where the summer is queen,
And her regal profusion enriches the scene,
Till earth is enrobed in her emerald dyes,
And royal emblazonry glows on the skies;
Where the signet of loveliness ever has shone,
And the Spirit of Beauty established her throne?

Hast heard of a clime where the care-haunted bosom
Is soothed by the spells of the balm-breathing blossom;
Where the free spirit mirrors the height of the mountain,
The depth of the forest, the sheen of the fountain,
And loses its shadows of grief and of gloom
In tropical valleys all *riant* with bloom?

Hast sought over sunny savannas, the wood,
With its arches Titanic and still solitude,
Where zephyrs are curling the emerald billows
Of slow-swaying foliage, and under the willows
The fawn nestles down 'mid the feathery fern,
And the wild lily holds up her delicate urn?

Hast joined in the melody sweeping along
With a waving of plumage, a gushing of song;
Where the bob-o-link warbles, the oriole sings,
And the mocking-bird's madrigal gleefully rings;
Where the stately magnolia the woodland perfumes,
And the parroquet flutters his rich-tinted plumes?

Hast looked on the hill-side the south wind has kissed,
When its bold breath has lifted its veiling of mist;
Or soft-shadowed vistas lit up by the gleams
Of glittering sunshine and far-flashing streams;
Where the sweet waters melt on the coralline shore,
Like the murmurs of love from the lips we adore?

Dost dream of an Eden whose bright-flowing waters
Find rivals as graceful and pure in its daughters;
Of a lip's living coral, a cheek where the rose
Sheds its soft, dimpled freshness and dewy repose;
Of an eye oriental, where witchery sleeps
Enshrined in its kindling and passionate deeps?

Canst tell of her sons, ever chainless and free
As their proud rivers seeking the blue-rolling sea,
By frost never fettered, whose spirits of fire
Flash forth the quick impulse of love or of ire;
As noble, as knightly, as brave as in years
Long past were their fathers, the bold Cavaliers?

Oh! swift as a bird to its bowery nest,
My young spirit flies from a world of unrest
To the sheltering hearts all aglow, like the prime
Of Summer abroad in our glorious clime;
And with pride we 'll proclaim it wherever we roam—
"I too am a Southron—the South is my home!"

"Why do I love you?"

"Why do I love you?" On the waters stilly
Floats the soft shadow of a shining star;
And close beside it a white lotus-lily
Droops to the lulling tide, more bright by far.
Now wherefore does the wavelet love the blossom
More than the star-queen on her sapphire throne,
If not because he bears it on his bosom?
He loves it, too, because *it is his own.*

"Why do I love you?" When the tulip flaunting
Blazons the garden, why to dewy dells
Passes the humbird, like a lover haunting
The nook where hide the honeysuckle bells?
Ah! is it not that tenderness and beauty
Are doubly beautiful in solitude?
And loveliness, receiving love as duty,
(Or tribute,) to *be won* must *first be wooed.*

"Why do I love you?" Just beyond that highland
Lie the blue billows of a lovely lake,
And on its placid breast a fairy island
Smiles like a tiny infant, half awake
And dreaming of the angels. Wherefore beameth
So richly there the glory-mantled sun?
Oh! is it not because that island seemeth
A jewel all alone—*an only one?*

"Why do I love you?" By the glancing river
A delicate young aspen-tree is this:
See how its silver-tinted leaflets quiver,
Like pulses, to the zephyr's stolen kiss!
The wind has been a trifler, ranging over
The wood, coquetting with a thousand trees,
Yet here he seems to bide—what chains the rover?
Is it because the aspen *loves the breeze?*

"Why do I love you?" 'Tis a knotty question,
Insoluble perhaps by mental laws:
Suppose I drop the intellect's digestion,
And borrow woman's reason—"*just because;*"
Or else adopt the (pardon, I implore you!)
Faith of the fatalist, and say—I know,
Lady, I love you: Lulu, I adore you
Because my *destiny has willed it so!*

Light and Shadow.

"Joy gives us companions—Sorrow wins us friends."

Down in the valley sweeps a noble river,
All gayly glancing to the morning light—
Swiftest at eve; for boatmen old assever
That every stream runs faster in the night.
And thus it is that when a sombre shadow
Shadeth the sunshine of thy spirit free,
My love, like that deep river in the meadow,
Flows with a stronger, swifter tide to thee.

Filling the forest border there aboundeth
Bird-carollings of gayety and love;
But woodsmen say that in its heart resoundeth
No echo save the murmur of the dove.
Thus, dearest, happy songs and merry laughter
Float from my spirit; but they have no part
In the rich tenderness that echoes after
Deep in the shadows of my silent heart.

O'er the blue billow looms a lofty mountain,
Its summit crested like a chieftain proud;
And travellers will tell you of a fountain
There gushing 'neath a never-lifting cloud.
If e'er thou standest where a great ambition
Has strewn thy pathway with the rock, and thrown
A cloud upon thy soul's far-reaching vision,
Thou hast a love to cheer thee, all thine own.

In golden characters thy fond adoring
Might lie concealed upon a page pure white;
Yet scholars hint that they could bring, by pouring
A bitter liquid o'er it, all to light.
Oh! if thou ever doubt my love, I pray thee
Drop but one tear upon the living scroll
Of my white spirit, and it shall repay thee
With golden legends graven on my soul!

The Orphan's Mother.

I STOOD amid the multitude, and suddenly there came,
Like some new-kindled comet-star, just born of light and flame,
A being brightly beautiful. Remembrance even now
Calls up again her curling lip, and clear, dark-arching brow,
With the rich, red tulip-wreath across her proudly-throbbing breast,
And the hair in sable ripples flowing o'er her gorgeous vest;
And the undefined expression, too—half passion, half surprise—
That flashed, and flamed, and faded, in her strangely glancing eyes:
'T was a vast and lighted temple, where a jostling, jewelled throng,
With their thunder-pealing plaudits, hailed a gifted Queen of Song;
But I asked my guardian angel for a vision brighter yet,
And there came into my heart the thought of "MOTHER MARGARET."

Far down the dim cathedral aisle a stately pageant moved,
And in the gathered crowd there stood one lovely and beloved;
She seemed to stand there suddenly—I knew not whence or where—
Not life-like, but a spirit born of undulating air:
All white, and wan, and delicate, as is the pale moon-flower
That peers at early dawning from its elfin-hidden bower;
And the coldly vacant azure of her heaven-directed eye,
To the world's inquiring gaze returned no definite reply.
The stoléd priests were round her—well I knew their solemn tryst,
With organ-hymn and orison to hail the bride of Christ;—
But my heart was yet an alien, and my aching eyelids wet
With orphan tears—I turned away to "Mother Margaret."

Through a low, moss-covered casement, mantled with the ivy-bloom,
Peered I, on a summer's morning. 'T was an humbly furnished room:
On a simple couch, half-covered o'er with buds and blossoms wild,
By its fragile, pale, dead mother, lay a fairy, fawn-like child.
With her rose-lips softly parted, as to show the pearls beneath,
And her tiny fingers busy with a dainty daisy wreath,
Her mingled laugh and prattle seemed the merry minstrelsy
That steals along the terrace, when the early bird and bee

Wake the lily from its slumbers. Thus beneath the summer skies
Seemed this child a laughing Peri, strayed a while from Paradise;
Then I thought—and that sweet vision I shall nevermore forget—
That *for such unguarded angels* lives good "MOTHER MARGARET!"

The Angels of Fever and of Frost.

I.

NIGHT o'er the Crescent City! Hark! she sings,
"Woe to the land with overshadowing wings!"

Is she the victim of a judgment just,
That noble city, sitting with the dust
On her pale forehead? Shrouded in eclipse,
And in thick shadows veiling her proud head;
Loathing the sunlight, while her blanchéd lips
Quiver and mutter o'er her children dead,
Whom dust and darkness cover. Is this rod
Type of His justice, and the "scourge of God?"
Not rocked by earthquakes to a dreaming sleep—
Not lost amid the wild tornado's sweep
With the black besom of destruction dire—
Not by the crevasse, or the wasting fire,
Comes LAW to judgment.

Like a lurid flame
On some huge pagan altar glowing, came
And passed the burning day; like it, 'mid cries
And groans licked up its human sacrifice!
A gaunt and gloating eye, a presence vague,
Sat in the molten air—the Moloch of the plague:
One glance of that fierce eye with subtle glare,
His nerveless victims sank in wild despair;
And day by day, his altar dark and dread
Was heaped with horrid cries—"Bring out your dead!"

The stately city! Then her vaulted domes
Echoed the knell of desolated homes;
Her strength o'ertasked, her regal beauty faded,
Her pleasure-paths with yew and upas shaded,
Her fairest day seemed of the night a part—
Night an abyss—when from her reeling heart,
Laden with silence ominous and dread,
The wind came up o'er the unburied dead,
Close, hot, and stifling, like the drunkard's breath—
And Terror stalked abroad with Grief and Death.

Then of her noblest spirits, many a one
Was left to struggle darkly and alone,
With wife or mother, angel-babe or bride,
Father or lover, perished from its side,
For none their doom might stay. The grave's eclipse

Hid beauty's withered brow and shrunken lips;
Stern Power his sceptre brake; and Wealth his gold
Gave for one narrow house, so drear and cold;
And Intellect—whose treasury of mind
Was filled with jewels, rare as those they find
On Indian shores, in far Golconda's mine—
Bowed low, and laid them on the burning shrine.

Hoarse spake the angel as he onward trod,
And gave them to the coffin and the clod—
"Down, down to the charnel, to rot and to rust;
Heap ashes to ashes, and dust unto dust!"

II.

Night o'er the Crescent City! Lo! she sings,
"A Saviour comes with healing on his wings!"

Courage, thou stricken one! Behold on high
The moon, sole shadow on the lucent sky,
Floats in her golden shallop-shell along
The deep and tide-like azure. Gay the throng
That sweeps thy thoroughfares; and through the clear
And silvery billows of thine atmosphere
Glitter a thousand lamps, as upward come
The shout, the song, the spirit-stirring hum
Of labor and of life. Thy heart was rent,
Thy proud head low to misery was bent;

But like unto a voice at night that crieth,
Dying away in gloom, the phantom dieth,
And the black shadows of thy sorrow's night
Break in a golden morning. New delight—
The Frost has come, and thy quick pulses leap
As to a bugle-blast!

From jagged steep
And gray, crag-rifted fissure, whence the rills
Go dancing down the rugged Northern hills;
Where the bold mountain to the keen, clear sky
Lifts up his pine-clad summit, and on high
The autumn's banners on the wind are tossed,
Comes he, the radiant Angel of the Frost!

Still as a star-beam through a cloudy rift,
And as serenely shining—yet as swift
As the first slanted rays of morning rise
To do the bidding of the great All-wise—
He came. How silent, how mysterious, too,
This spirit of a wandering cloud of dew!
Fresh from the waters of his crystal chrism,
His wings shook off the rainbows like a prism:
The sunbeam, stealing in all glad and bright
To some dark mountain gorge, till all is light,
Was not more beautiful. In silentness—
As erst of old an angel came to bless

God's chosen people with exemption, free
From the dread plague of childless misery,
An Angel of the Passover—his breath
Wrought on each crystal casement, "Free from death,"
In quaint and gorgeous tracery. To part
And vanish soon—unlike the grief of heart,
Where memories, lengthening, lie for evermore,
Like the long sunset shadows—all is o'er:
Under the rooftree THEY will sit alone,
And weep to find their fairest, brightest—gone.
Yet sang the angel, as his pinion high,
Up the blue ether floating, sought the sky:
"A spirit sent forth from the Mighty to save,
I have conquered the conqueror, Death and the grave!"

The Katydid.

"They tell me," he replied, "that such is the extreme sensitiveness of this little insect, that if you but lay your hand upon the tree where one is singing, it will immediately cease." He paused, and laid his ungloved hand upon the trunk: in a few moments the little singing creatures stopped suddenly, and all was as silent in the tree as if no living thing were busy in its heart!

When, wrapped in his mantle of gold and vermilion,
Swift urging thro' cloud-land his meteor-car,
The day-god at eve sought his western pavilion,
Low hung on the border of oceans afar;
Away from the din of the dark city flying,
We stood where a mound near the river arose;
Where murmuring waters, to low winds replying,
Were lulling the twilight to dreamy repose.

High up in the oak-boughs a chorus was ringing,
With fairy-like music enchanting the ear—
'T was the delicate "Katydid" merrily singing,
And sylphs of the ether had lingered to hear.

Your hand on the tree-trunk, a mortal revealing,
Stole up to her frame with a magical thrill:
Half pleased, half affrighted, (so strange was the feeling,)
The blithe little singer grew suddenly still!

When sadly the moon, like a pale captive maiden,
Looked out from her cloud-prison's long purple bars,
With silvery fetters her white limbs were laden,
And round her were watching the sentinel stars;
We sat by the river, my heart throbbing lightly
As quivered the red leaves above us that hung—
From my lip the gay fantasies rippled as sprightly
And soft as the song that the "Katydid" sung.

You drew me toward you, and fervently told me
How long your proud spirit a captive had been:
What could have possessed you so close to enfold me?
How could I permit you to "get up a scene?"
Yet could *I* prevent it?—the blush that arises
Steals down to my heart with a magical thrill:
Half pleased, half affrighted at Love's sweet disguises,
The poor little trembler grew suddenly still!

The Little Brothers.

We gathered the pale, pale roses,
To garland the shrine of clay,
Where a paler and purer beauty
Like a shadow of glory lay.
We parted the ringlets golden
That waved over brows so white,
And we folded the fringed lids over
The eyes in their faded light.

The delicate arms lay twining
In tenderest half-embrace,
And the smile of a ransomed spirit
Shone over each tiny face;
Till scarce could we think that truly
The jewels had passed away,
And the beautiful forms before us
Were naught but the casket's clay.

Then down to a dreamless slumber
We laid them at daylight's close,
And the shade of the tall old tree-tops
Fell over their last repose.
The wind stole up with a whisper
Of love on the balmy air,
And we deemed that a white-robed angel
With a viewless harp hung there.

We gathered them down so softly
To a long, unbroken sleep,
That it seemed like a sin to sorrow,
And a murmuring wrong to weep;
For o'er them the starry watchers,
With tremulous urns of light,
Came stealing to fill our places,
As we whispered them both—"*Good-night!*"

They faded from life so early,
That the "things of this world" will seem
To their new existence only
A vague and a pleasant dream:
They will think that they sank to slumber
On a beautiful balmy even,
To wake on a lovelier morning,
And find that the earth was heaven!

The Dream of Pythagoras.

"In another part of the GARDENS, a group of seven nymphs, each with a star upon her forehead, represented the movements of the planetary choir—thus embodying the theory of the Philosopher into a moving and musical reality."

I.

THE CARNIVAL OF BEAUTY! From her urn
The twilight-spirit scatters clouds that burn
In the red sundown; and, with gentle care,
Darkens the waters, where, all pale and fair,
The young moon-shadow floats, as in her shroud,
Over the Lake of Temples; for the proud,
Triumphal pageantry of Day has passed:
The dying of the warrior-sun is glassed
Upon a distant ocean; and alone
She walks the sky—its light—its only one.
'T is the "good-night" of flowers: they sink to sleep
Where, by the blue lake's side, the gardens sweep,
And thousand torches, with their colored light,
Like jewels flashing on the veil of Night,
Are flinging flakes of crimson, gold, and green,
O'er column, cupola, and polished sheen

Of lofty marble walls. Swift o'er the tide
Sweep the light galleys in their graceful pride,
Tossing the billows till their gilded prows
Set the white spray on fire! And near them bows
The verdure of a deep, luxurious shade,
By laurel, laburnum, and myrtle made:
The artificial wood, and cliff on high,
Lend shadow to the fountains. Sparkling nigh,
Stand vase and tripod, richly set with gems,
And statues, born of art, which diadems
Were all too poor to buy. The light, the gales,
Seem laden with the balm of Indian vales;
And wheresoe'er their fragrant pinions stray,
The harps of Eolus, awakened, play.
The vaulted roofs reëcho far along
The wild, sweet gush of woman's laugh and song,
And in the groves a murmured melody
Of lover's vows, soft as when infancy
Lisps its low orisons. Around, above,
Float Beauty, Pleasure, Melody, and Love!

II.

Onward! yet stay thee by the lakelet's wave,
Where billows blue the lotus-lilies lave;
Where, shadowed by the palm and desert-date,
Stands a Pavilion by the eastern gate—

The "Temple of the Morning!" canopied
With dyes auroral, and its pillars hid
Soft in Sidonian purple. Silken veils
Hang round it, waving like the snowy sails
Of some proud galley; and strange, foreign trees
Sway to the gentle rocking of the breeze,
Which bears, far up their foliage-shadowed naves,
The muffled, bell-like tinkle of the waves,
Low-toned and dim; and from the dome away
Centres a sun—a mimic king of day,
Flooding the scene with radiance, and his blaze
Bathing the atmosphere in golden haze,
Till all is softened to that mellow flush
Which follows when the daylight's dying blush
Has faded from the sky. Then fold on fold,
Slowly revolving, back the curtains rolled
As purple clouds, what time the Hours do sound
The tocsin of the morning. Far around
There stands a throng; yet silence seems to brood
O'er the quick pulses of that multitude,
Tranced by a spell, and lost in fancy's maze:
With heart on lip, and soul in eye, they gaze
To catch the rising of each symbol star,
Emblems of those that gem the heavens afar,
Circling in harmony about the sun,
As the old sage had dreamed.

III.

'T is done!
With music sweet as when through golden bars
Of the first morning sang the bird-like stars,
This bright creation rose to mortal eyes,
Fair as its counterpart upon the skies!
Amid a gush of joyous minstrelsy,
Like blended music of the bird and bee,—
As Spring's first blossom starting from the mould,
Fair, fragile daughter of the dreary wold,
Flinging a light upon the desert air
Of bloom and beauty,—young IANTHE there
Leaped to the circle, paused, and looked around.
Whence came she?—did the dark and silent ground
Yield that sweet blossom? or the bending sky
Send forth a sylphide from its arches high?
Is she a thing of earth? or ether rare,
Colored, and vivified, and floating there?
No answer came: the fairy, fawn-like child,
Touched the white star upon her brow, and smiled.
Her cheek was dimpled, and its roseate hue
Deepened: her tresses on the night-wind flew:
Humid with honey-dew the wild-bee sips,
Glowed the bright coral of her parted lips:
Light as the zephyr's love, Anemone,
Danced the young Bayadère. With childish glee

She marked the gaze of wonder and surprise,
And merry fancies lit her bright brown eyes:
Light laughed she, low and sweet, as if to hide
Some pleasant secret; as the playful tide
Lies calm, yet dimpling, with its golden glow
Hiding the treasures of the deep below.
What was her little secret?—slow 't was solved,
As one by one her sister stars revolved
Around with her. The child IANTHE shone
First of the circle, nearest to the throne
Where sits the day-god.

IV.

Softly, softly swells
A dash of waves, a sound of Triton shells:
The silken veils of the Pavilion sway
And tremble as the breezes through them play,
Disclosing ivory barque, and purple sail,
And streamers swelling on the gentle gale:
The Triton crowd, the nymphs of ocean green,
Naiads and syrens, grace the wizard scene
Now blazoned o'er the lake—a pageantry
Gorgeous and beautiful exceedingly.
'T is APHRODITE! on her silver shell,
Bright as a fairy's rainbow coracle,
She rises softly from her billowy home,
Fresh as its waters, pure as snowy foam,

And as the shallop strikes the emérald strand,
Sweeps to her station 'mid her sister band.
Bright Daughter of the Sea! the very fall
Of her white feet is light and musical
As are the moonlit waters: every tress
Is glowing and instinct with loveliness;
Where, flaked with foam, o'er arms and bosom fair,
Sweep the long shadows of her golden hair,
And where the yellow curls are softly rolled,
Sunshine lies prisoned in each wavy fold,
Gemmed with the diamond-dew, and crowned the while
With pure white lotus-lilies of the Nile;
And dreamy shadows on her eyelids press,
Like that of Love in summer idleness:
The stilly beauty of her blush-warm cheek
Reveals a secret lips could never speak;
And the soft spirit of her lustrous eye,
Like violets where the dew weighs heavily,
Droops with a voiceless eloquence: its gaze
Is Love's sweet silence that Love's self betrays;
And meet it is; for here this gentle dove
Shines "Star of Lovers," and the "Queen of Love."

V.

What miracle from Flora's radiant bowers
Is this?—a living, moving wall of flowers?

Swiftly advancing through the purple gloom,
A band of maidens, wholly veiled in bloom,
Appear—a mass of blossoms, buds, and leaves,
Gracefully woven as the sylphide weaves
Her garlands of the rainbow: they repose
One moment on the circle—they unclose—
Forth bounds the blooming Terra!—they are gone,
And she is left, their fairest, brightest one!
The morning mist that o'er the earth is driven,
Steals all its splendor from the upper heaven:
So seems she there, half earth, half spirit too,
A child of clay; and yet her beauty's hue
Was stolen from the sky. Her scarce-breathed sigh,
Her changing cheek, her timid, half-veiled eye,
Tell she has listed Love's sweet flatteries;
Yet are her spirit's angel melodies
Unsullied all, and innocently gay
As childhood's laugh on summer hills away.
One small white hand holds back the auburn hair
From off the blue-veined temple; and the fair
And velvet vermeil of her cheek we see
Grow bright and warm with graceful modesty.
Soft as the first blush of the dawning hour,
Sweet as the fragrance of a bee-kissed flower,
Her gentle nature has its hidden cells,
Full of rich offerings, where ever dwells

Love to all things. 'T is pity she has worn
A crown of roses bearing still the thorn;
For one has wounded her: a crimson streak
Of blood-drops darkly lies upon her meek
And else unsullied brow. And yet 't is well;
For true the annals of our planet tell
Of pain, of bliss, of agony, of mirth,
A mingled strain; and Terra is the Earth.

VI.

A shout of triumph rends the darkened skies,
A pealing strain of bugle melodies,
Blent with the trumpet call. How grand its swell
Upon the odorous air, the while its knell
Shakes the rich draperies! Then darting swift
As lightning from the tempest's cloudy rift,
From out the shadow sweeps a pard-drawn car,
With one who poised upon it, like the star
Of battle shining. To the circle there
Lightly she springs, as buoyant on the air
As the freed eagle soaring to the sun,
A glorious shape—the bold, young Amazon!
Less lovely than her sisters, proud and cold,
Yet not less beautiful; of sterner mould
Her heart; and neither blush, nor sigh, nor smile,
Ruffles her brow or bosom all the while;

And yet a voice she has—such tones may dwell,
Only at midnight, in a blush-dyed shell.
Clashing her cymbals comes she from afar,
As if she panted for the din of war:
Her hair dark-rolling from her helmet free,
Like a black banner waves triumphantly:
Her eye is keen: it darts its flashing glances,
As when the sunlight kindles serried lances:
Oft in the field the lightning of that eye
Flamed in the battle, as from earth to sky
Pealed the loud clarion: its orb of fire
Could despots tame, and valor's soul inspire
To deeds of noble daring. Broidered fold
On fold descending sweeps the shaded gold
And crimson banner: o'er her gorgeous vest
Her crownlike helmet, and its snowy crest
Of heavy, waving plumes. The jewelled sheen,
The haughty step, the glance, proclaim the Queen,
Bold IPPOLYTA; and among the stars,
Child of the battle, type of fiery Mars!

VII.

Forth from (what seems) a falling star, she springs
Like a gazelle, and wild the echo rings—
DJOUNI!
The Arab girl, betrayed, beguiled,
Dark, beautiful, and fierce, the desert's child:

It is as though in some deep mountain-shrine
Springs to the eye a sudden-lighted mine
Of gold and jewels. Her clear-arching brow,
Quick, curling nostril, all inflated now,
And eyes that sleep in darkness, speak her race.
Graceful in gliding to her circle place,
With hasty hand, from off her forehead pale,
She flings aside a heavy, pall-like veil;
And, with a soul all passion and all fire,
The priestess of Osiris swings her lyre;
While from her lip steals forth a monody
Deep-uttered, like a song of prophecy.
Red tulips cluster in her midnight hair,
Half braided up with gems, half on the air,
And o'er her bosom flowing, as to rest
In sable ripples on her crimson vest.
Her slender form two jewelled zones enclasp,
And rubies glitter in her dagger's hasp:
She stops, she starts: the eloquent rich blood,
Like the red lava's swift and burning flood,
Shoots to her throbbing temples. Is it shame,
Or only modesty that wakes the flame?
Her eyes are veiled: her spirit may not brook
That others on the soul they hold should look;
Conscious that now she cannot choose but hide
Her heart—its power, its passion, and its pride!

Yet all alone, and she will sit and brood
Upon the phantoms of her feverish mood,
(Her thoughts, at least, her own, uncurbed and wild,
As best becomes the wandering Bedouin's child,)
Until her eyelids close, and childhood's years
Have bathed their aching orbs in tender tears.
She dances here to-night: it was *his* will
Her beauty should enchant the crowd; and still,
Though wretched, ruined, fallen, and betrayed,
She wept, implored, still loved, and still obeyed!

VIII.

A circling mist arose on snow-white wings,
Wreathing and twining in two vapory rings:
Slowly it rose—it passed—that halo cloud;
And there, beneath it, stood a form more proud,
More silent, more serenely bright, than all
Who yet are marshalled in that tented hall.
Like a new planet ushered into space,
Pausing one moment ere her glorious race
Begin, to pray and lift her upward gaze,
Intensely worshipping. Then in the maze
She joins anon. A vestal queen might wear
Such lofty mien—such proud, imperial air;
Might envy her that large, dark-rolling eye,
So full of soul in native majesty.

How strange those eyes, and deep! their dusky hue
Like the brown twilight which the moon looks through:
At times, 't is said, they shoot a fiercer ray,
Like the swift meteor on its glancing way
Among the night-clouds. Yet it is not oft,
For now their glance is calm, and mild, and soft—
Soft as her voice, which echoes like a flute
In some dim aisle, when all things else are mute.
The chiselled outline of her faultless face
Would be severe, save for its sad, sweet grace.
Pale passion-flowers—such as strew the sod
Around the altar of the "Unknown God"—
Bind her loose tresses; and her features hold
A fixedness, still, statuesque, and cold,
Yet winning, and most lovely. All so pale!
Her heart, too, slumbers in its hiding veil:
If love, if hate e'er haunted it, to none
She told the tale, but patiently and lone
Bore on—bore all—till by a deep control
Peace sat amid the shadows of her soul.
Ah! she too much of life has early known,
The flattered, worshipped, loved, and still *alone*.
LEONTIUM! amid the starry throng
How like a goddess crowned she sweeps along,
Treading the lofty circle of the skies
As if familiar with their mysteries!

IX.

A mystic, subtle, delicate perfume
Stole up the arches of that silken room,
Blinding the senses. Darker, darker grows
The atmosphere, and faint the day-god glows;
Yet in a moment all is bright—'t is past—
Another star has risen—'t is the last.

Whence came it? born of light, or darkened air?
Enough 't is here, and none know whence or where.
Silent, and shadowy, and like a spell
Of glamour on the air, her presence fell
Mysterious and resistless. Nothing warm
Or living seems she; but her fragile form
Swims, floating in the eye, unreal all,
And cold as moonlight on a marble wall.
As from a fall of many-tinted spray,
Half in a mist-wreath shrouding up its way,
Mocking the young enthusiast's summer dream,
Steals forth the spirit of a haunted stream,
And on a jutting rock seems poised, to dwell
Hung in mid air, and balanced by a spell—
So shone CYANE. Cold azure is her eye:
It neither question asks, nor gives reply
To those that question it. And yet 't is meek,
With long, gold lashes; and the white-rose cheek

They shade is all so pure and pale, its hue
Rivals the pallid moon-flower washed in dew.
Her heart is far away: in silentness,
Cold and unsunned, it lies; and she will press
Her thin hand on it with a 'wildered air,
As if to question whether its despair
Has chilled it utterly, and life has passed
Unmarked, unfelt, unheeded, and *at last.*
Hers is a common destiny. She heard, believed;
She loved, she trusted, and she was deceived!
So like her life, her race so darkly run,
To that pale planet farthest from the sun!

X.

Round their dark orbits sweep those forms of light,
Marking in harmony their wheeling flight;
Seven lovely maidens, gathered side by side,
Of Greece the flower, of Athens' halls the pride:
Now dancing o'er the twilight's darkened line,
Now filing out into the morning's shine;
Now floating inward to the dawning's shade,
By veils of crimson, gold, and silver made;
Then flashing back, amid a thousand streams
Of rosy brilliancy, the sunset's beams;
All flitting by like birds of gorgeous dyes,
Which poets tell us come from Paradise!

The sun looks down; and to the music's notes
Faster the lovely pageant round him floats:
As fall the silvery leaves of Saraschind,
Their white feet, glancing, bound upon the wind;
Wreathed and unwreathing, parting but to meet,
Softly their voices mingle, wild and sweet,
As, scattering buds and blossoms in their way,
Whirls round and round the beautiful array.
The darkness falls—the pageantry is o'er—
The footfalls echo music's tones no more;
The dancing stars are gone—the sun has set—
Lonely and mournfully the winds have met
In the Pavilion lone. So down the stream
Of Time thus passes the enchanted "Dream;"
And the bright planet-system, far abroad,
Sweeps onward, like a thought, a dream of God!

Forest Home, '55.

The End.

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